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See
Vol 1

BARBAROSSA



ZAPHIRA

MY VIRTUOUS SON!

HOW SHALL I BEE REPAIR THY VIRTUOUS LOVE!

ACT V.

SCENE III

PAINTED BY WOODFORD

PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN & CO

ENGRAVED BY HEATH

THE
BRITISH THEATRE;

OR,

A COLLECTION OF PLAYS,

WHICH ARE ACTED AT

THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE, COVENT GARDEN, AND HAYMARKET.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOKS.

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL REMARKS,

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

IN TWENTY-FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. XV.

BARBAROSSA.

WAY TO KEEP HIM.

ALL IN THE WRONG.

GRECIAN DAUGHTER.

KNOW YOUR OWN MIND.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1808.

WILLIAM SAVAGE, PRINTER,

BRITISH THEATRE

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BEDFORD BURY.

BARBAROSSA;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

BY DR. BROWN.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS
FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

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BARBAROSSA;
A TRAGEDY
IN FIVE ACTS
BY
J. B. CLAYTON
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REMARKS.

It is a painful task to record the calamities which befall the human race. The wants, the difficulties, the vicissitudes of pain and sorrow, in an author's life are proverbial: but the unhappy author of this Tragedy, in the fate to which he was destined, renders the ills of all other poets comparatively small—he became a suicide.

Dr. John Brown was born at Rothbury, in the county of Northumberland, in 1715. His father was a native of Scotland, and Curate of Rothbury; and afterwards collated to a vicarage in Cumberland. Here his son received his earliest education, and was then sent to St. John's College, Cambridge.

Mr. Brown gained high reputation in the University, and made choice of divinity for his profession. His first preferment was to a minor canonry and lectureship at Carlisle, where he remained in obscurity till the rebellion in the year 1745, when he united the valour of the soldier to the piety of the ecclesiastic, and entering the army a volunteer, acted with distinguished bravery at the siege of Carlisle Castle. He was now presented to the living of Moreland, in Westmoreland.

On the death of Pope, Mr. Brown first appeared as an author, by publishing his Essay on Satire, ad-

dressed to Dr. Warburton, by whose interest Lord Hardwicke bestowed on him the living of Great Horkesley, in Essex. He now took his degree of Doctor.

In 1755 this Tragedy was produced, and with success. The year following a second tragedy, called "Athelstan," appeared, by the same author; but with a less kind reception.

Dr. Brown now published his most celebrated work, "An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times:" and the next year was presented to a vicarage in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He was also appointed one of the Chaplains in Ordinary to the King. Here his clerical preferments rested; which is supposed to have wounded his ambitious mind.

Some coolness having taken place between Dr. Brown and the two great patrons upon whom all his hopes of advancement in the church depended, (Hardwicke and Warburton,) the Doctor accepted an invitation from the Empress of Russia, to superintend a grand design she had formed of extending civilization throughout her vast empire. He prepared for his journey—but, perchance, some lingering affection to his native land—some irresistible horror at the prospect before him, might depress or agitate his spirits to that insanity, which instigated him to prefer an ignominious death, to a life of misery.

It is well for the literary reputation of this Author, that he produced other works besides dramas. The Tragedy of Barbarossa does not confer much honour upon a man of his extensive learning and imputed

abilities. He has evidently borrowed from various dramatic productions his fable, and also the best of his characters, at least their corporeal parts ; for the spirit of those personages is left behind.

Garrick, in Achmet, and Mossop, in the tyrant, are supposed to have contributed to the success of this play, by their skill in acting, as much as the Author did himself, by his art of writing. It appears, that Garrick had more anxiety than usual upon such occasions, that "Barbarossa" should be a favourite with the town ; for he wrote both the Prologue and Epilogue, and even delivered the first himself. His civility was not, however, repaid by the Author's gratitude ; for, having made an allusion in his Epilogue to the old jest, an author's poverty and hunger, Dr. Brown thought such misfortunes degrading to a clergyman ; and chose to be considered in the quality of a modern, rather than a primitive minister of the gospel.

This is the drama, in which Master Betty made his first appearance on a London stage. Curiosity to see him, was equalled by admiration on beholding him. His beauty and grace were like that of a seraph.

Of his genuine talents as an actor, no greater number of persons can perhaps judge, than can estimate the true value of a painting—and they are few indeed.

To argue the question upon matter of fact, rather than on the disputed claims of correct taste, which every party conceive they possess—these are the facts : A great majority of the audience thought young Betty a complete tragedian—yet he failed in that power over

their hearts, which ought to have ended the argument in demonstration.

Bursts of laughter were excited from the audience in divers parts of this Tragedy on his first appearance, which could not have occurred from any adventitious burlesque or ludicrous event whatever, had the minds of the auditors been once inwrapt, and not left vacant, for the quick reception of every trait of ridicule.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ACHMET	<i>Master Betty.</i>
BARBAROSSA	<i>Mr. Hargrave.</i>
OTHMAN	<i>Mr. Murray.</i>
SADI	<i>Mr. Creswell.</i>
ALADIN	<i>Mr. Chapman.</i>
YUSEF	<i>Mr. Abbot.</i>
HASSAN	<i>Mr. Atkins.</i>
OFFICERS—	<i>Messrs. L. Bologna, Goodwin, Jefferies,</i>
	<i>Lee, Lewiss, Powers, Sarjant, Trueman.</i>
ZAPHIRA	<i>Mrs. Litchfield.</i>
IRENE	<i>Miss Brunton.</i>
SEMIRA	<i>Mrs. Gaudry.</i>

SCENE,—The Royal Palace of Algiers.

BARBAROSSA.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter OTHMAN and a SLAVE.

Oth. A stranger, say'st thou, that inquires of Othman?

Slave. He does: and waits admittance.

Oth. Did he tell
His name and quality?

Slave. That he declin'd:
But call'd himself thy friend.

Oth. Conduct the stranger to me. [*Exit SLAVE.*]
Perhaps some worthy citizen, return'd
From voluntary exile to Algiers,
Once known in happier days.

Enter SADI.

Ah, Sadi here!

My honour'd friend!

Sadi. Stand off—pollute me not:
These honest arms, tho' worn with want, disdain
Thy gorgeous trappings, earn'd by foul dishonour.

Oth. Forbear thy rash reproaches: for beneath
This habit, which to thy mistaken eye

Confirms my guilt, I wear a heart as true
As Sadi's to my king.

Sadi. Why then beneath
This cursed roof, this black usurper's palace,
Dar'st thou to draw infected air, and live
The slave of insolence!

O shame to dwell
With murder, lust, and rapine! did he not
Come from the depths of Barca's solitude,
With fair pretence of faith and firm alliance?
Did not our grateful king, with open arms,
Receive him as his guest? O fatal hour!
Did he not then with hot, adul'trous eye,
Gaze on the Queen Zaphira? Yes, 'twas lust,
Lust gave th' infernal whisper to his soul,
And bade him murder, if he would enjoy!
Yet thou, pernicious traitor, unabash'd
Canst wear the murd'rer's badge.

Oth. Mistaken man!
Yet still I love thee:
Still unprovok'd by thy intemperate zeal,
Could passion prompt me to licentious speech,
Bethink thee—might I not reproach thy flight
With the foul names of fear and perfidy?
Didst thou not fly, when Barbarossa's sword
Reek'd with the blood of thy brave countrymen?
What then did I?—Beneath this hated roof,
In pity to my widow'd queen——

Sadi. In pity?

Oth. Yes, Sadi! Heav'n is witness, pity sway'd me.
With honest guile I did inroll my name
In the black list of Barbarossa's friends:
In hope, that some propitious hour might rise,
When Heav'n would dash the murd'rer from his
throne,

And give young Selim to his orphan'd people.

Sadi. Indeed! canst thou be true?

Oth. By Heav'n, I am.

Sadi. Why then dissemble thus?

Oth. Have I not told thee?

I held it vain, to stem the tyrant's pow'r,
By the weak efforts of an ill-tim'd rage.

Sadi. I find thee honest: and with pride
Will join thy counsels.

Can aught, my friend, be done?

Can aught be dar'd?

Oth. We groan beneath the scourge.

This very morn, on false pretence of vengeance,
For the foul murder of our honour'd king,
Five guiltless wretches perish'd on the rack.

Sadi. O my devoted country!

But say, the widow'd queen—my heart bleeds for her.

Oth. Hemm'd round by terrors,
Within this cruel palace, once the seat
Of ev'ry joy, thro' seven long tedious years,
She mourns her murder'd lord, her exil'd son,
Her people fall'n: the murd'rer of her lord,
Returning now from conquest o'er the Moors,
Tempts her to marriage; but with noble firmness,
Surpassing female, she rejects his vows,
Scorning the horrid union. Meantime he,
With ceaseless hate, pursues her exil'd son,
The virtuous youth, ev'n into foreign climes.
Ere this, perhaps, he bleeds. A murd'ring ruffian
Is sent to watch his steps, and plunge the dagger
Into his guiltless breast.

Sadi. Is this thy faith!

Tamely to witness to such deeds of horror!

Give me thy poignard; lead me to the tyrant.

What tho' surrounding guards——

Oth. Repress thy rage.

Thou wilt alarm the palace, wilt involve
Thyself, thy friend, in ruin. Haste thee hence;
Haste to the remnant of our loyal friends,
And let maturer councils rule thy zeal.

Sadi. Yet let us ne'er forget our prince's wrongs.

Remember, Othman, (and let vengeance rise)
How in the pangs of death, and in his gore
Welt'ring, we found our prince!

His royal blood,
The life-blood of his people, o'er the bath
Ran purple! Oh, remember! and revenge!

Oth. Doubt not my zeal. But haste, and seek our
friends.

Near to the western port Almanzor dwells,
Yet uneduc'd by Barbarossa's power.
He will disclose to thee, if aught be heard
Of Selim's safety, or (what more I dread)
Of Selim's death. Thence best may our resolves
Be drawn hereafter. But let caution guide thee.

Sadi. I obey thee.

Near to the western port, thou say'st?

Oth. Ev'n there.

Close by the blasted palm-tree, where the mosque
O'erlooks the city. Haste thee hence, my friend.
I would not have thee found within these walls.

[*Flourish.*

And hark—these warlike sounds proclaim th' approach
Of the proud Barbarossa, with his train.

Begone——

Sadi. May dire disease and pestilence
Hang o'er his steps!—Farewell—Remember, Othman,
Thy queen's, thy prince's, and thy country's wrong.

[*Exit SADI.*

Oth. When I forget them, be contempt my lot!

Enter BARBAROSSA, GUARDS, &c.

Bar. Valiant Othman,
Are these vile slaves impal'd?

Oth. My lord, they are.

Bar. Did not the rack extort confession from them?

Oth. They died obdurate: While the melting crowd
Wept at their groans and anguish.

Bar. Curse on their womanish hearts!

But why sits
That sadness on thy brow : For oft I find thee
Musing and sad ; while joy for my return,
My sword victorious, and the Moors o'erthrown,
Resounds through all my palace.

Oth. Mighty warrior !
The soul, intent on offices of love,
Will oft neglect or scorn the weaker proof,
Which smiles or speech can give.

Bar. Well : Be it so.
To guard Algiers from anarchy's misrule,
I sway the regal sceptre.
But 'tis strange,
That when with open arms, I would receive
Young Selim ; would restore the crown, which death
Rest from his father's head—He scorns my bounty.
And proudly kindles war in foreign climes,
Against my power, who sav'd his bleeding country.

Enter ALADIN.

Aladin. Brave prince, I bring thee tidings
Of high concernment to Algiers and thee.
Young Selim is no more.

Oth. Selim no more !

Bar. Why that astonishment ?
He was our bitterest foe.

Oth. So perish all thy causeless enemies !

Bar. How died the prince, and where ?

Aladin. The rumour tells,
That flying to Oran, he there begg'd succours
From Ferdinand of Spain, t' invade Algiers.

Bar. From christian dogs !

Oth. How ! league with infidels !

Aladin. And there held council with the haughty
Spaniard,
To conquer and dethrone thee : But in vain :
For in a dark encounter with two slaves,
Wherein the one fell by his youthful arm,

Selim at length was slain.

Bar. Ungrateful boy!

Oft have I courted him to meet my kindness;
But still in vain; he shunn'd me like a pestilence:
Nor could I e'er behold him, since the down
Cover'd his manly cheek.—How many years
Number'd he?

Oth. I think, scarce thirteen, when his father died,
And, now, some twenty.

Bar. Othman, now for proof
Of undissembled service,——Well I know,
Thy long experienc'd faith hath plac'd thee high
In the queen's confidence:

Othman, she must be won.

Plead thou my cause of love:

Make her but mine,

And such unsought reward shall crown thy zeal,
As shall outsoar thy wishes.

Oth. Mighty king,
Where duty bids, I go.

Bar. Then haste thee, Othman,
Ere yet the rumour of her son's decease
Hath reach'd her ear;
Tell her, I come, borne on the wings of love!——
Haste—fly—I follow thee. [Exit OTHMAN.]

Now Aladin,

Now fortune bears us to the wish'd for port:

This was the rock I dreaded. Dost not think

Th' attempt was greatly daring?

Aladin. Bold as needful.

What boot'd it, to cut the old serpent off,

While the young adder nested in his place?

Bar. True: Algiers is mine,
Without a rival.

Yet I wonder much,

Omar returns not: Omar, whom I sent

On this high trust. I fear, 'tis he hath fall'n.

Didst thou not say, two slaves encounter'd Selim?

Aladin. Ay, two; 'tis rumour'd so.

Bar. And that one fell?

Aladin. Ev'n so:—By Selim's hand; while his companion

Planted his happier steel in Selim's heart.

Bar. Omar, I fear, is fall'n. From my right hand
I gave my signet to the trusty slave;
And bade him send it, as the certain pledge
Of Selim's death; if sickness or captivity
Or wayward fate, should thwart his quick return.

Aladin. The rumour yet is young; perhaps foreruns
The trusty slave's approach.

Bar. We'll wait th' event.

Mean time give out, that now the widow'd queen
Hath dried her tears, prepar'd to crown my love
By marriage rites; spread wide the flatt'ring tale:
For if persuasion win not her consent,
Pow'r shall compel.

This night my will devotes to feast and joy,
For conquest o'er the moor. Hence, Aladin;
And see the night-watch close the palace round.

[*Exit ALADIN.*

Now to the queen.

Enter IRENE.

My wayward daughter—Still with thy folly thwart
Each purpose of my soul?—Why these sullen tears?

Irene. Let not these tears offend my father's eye;
They are the tears of pity. From the queen
I come, thy suppliant.

Bar. What wouldst thou urge?

Irene. Thy dread return from war,
And proffer'd love, have open'd ev'ry wound,
The soft and lenient hand of time had clos'd.
If ever gentle pity touch'd thy heart,
Urge not thy harsh command
To see her; her distracted soul is bent
To mourn in solitude. She asks no more.

Bar. She mocks my love. Had not war,
And great ambition, call'd me from Algiers,
Ere this, my pow'r had reach'd what she denies.
But there's a cause, which touches on my peace,
And bids me brook no more her false delays.

Irene. Oh, frown not thus! Sure, pity ne'er deserv'd
A parent's frown! but look more kindly on me,
Let thy consenting pity mix with mine,
And heal the woes of weeping majesty.
Unhappy queen!

Bar. What means that gushing tear?

Irene. Oh never shall Irene taste of peace,
While poor Zaphira mourns.

Bar. Dry up thy tears. What! damp the general
triumph,
That echoes through Algiers! which now shall pierce
The vaulted heav'n, as soon as fame shall spread
Young Selim's death, my empire's bitt'rest foe.

Irene. O generous Selim! [Weeps.]

Bar. Ah! there's more in this!
Tell me, Irene:—on thy duty tell me,
Why, at this detested name of Selim,
Afresh thy sorrow streams?

Irene. Yes, I will tell thee,
For he is gone, and dreads thy hate no more;
My father knows, that scarce five moons are past,
Since the Moors seiz'd, and sold me at Oran,—
A hopeless captive in a foreign clime.

Bar. Too well I know, and rue the fatal day.
But what of this?

Irene. Oft have I told thee,
How midst the throng, a youth appear'd: his eye
Bright as the morning star.

Bar. And was it Selim?
Did he redeem thee?

Irene. With unsparing hand
He paid th' allotted ransom: At his feet I wept,
Dissolv'd in tears of gratitude and joy.

But when I told my quality and birth,
He started at the name of Barbarossa;
And thrice turn'd pale. Yet with recovery mild,
"Go to Algiers," he cried; "protect my mother,
And be to her what Selim is to thee."
Ev'n such, my father, was the gen'rous youth,
Who, by the hands of bloody, bloody men,
Lies number'd with the dead.

Bar. Amazement chills me!
Was this thy unknown friend conceal'd from me?
False—faithless child!

Irene. Could gratitude do less?
He said thy wrath pursu'd him; thence conjur'd me
Not to reveal his name.

Bar. Thou treacherous maid!
To stoop to freedom from thy father's foe!

Irene. Alas, my father!
He never was thy foe.

Bar. What! plead for Selim!
O coward! traitress to thy father's glory!
Hence from my sight!
Beware thee;—shun the queen: nor taint her ear
With Selim's fate.—Yes, she shall crown my love;
Or by our prophet, she shall dread my pow'r.

[*Exit* BARBAROSSA.]

Irene. Unhappy queen!
To what new scenes of horror art thou doom'd!
She but entreats to die
In her dear father's tent; thither, good queen,
My care shall speed thee, while suspicion sleeps.
What tho' my frowning father pour his rage
On my defenceless head; yet innocence
Shall yield her firm support! and conscious virtue
Gild all my days. Could I but save Zaphira,
Let the storm beat, I'll weep and pray, till she,
Bereft of her lov'd lord—of every joy bereft,
And Heav'n forget, my father e'er was cruel. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

Another Apartment.

Zaph. When shall I be at peace?—O righteous
 Heav'n,
 Strengthen my fainting soul, which fain would rise,
 To confidence in thee!—But woes on woes
 O'erwhelm me! first my husband—now my son!
 Both dead!—both slaughter'd by the bloody hand
 Of Barbarossa!

Enter OTHMAN.

O faithful Othman!
 Our fears were true:—my Selim is no more!

Oth. Has then the fatal secret reach'd thine ear?
 Inhuman tyrant!

Zaph. Strike him, Heav'n, with thunder!
 Nor let Zaphira doubt thy providence.

Oth. 'Twas what we fear'd. Oppose not Heav'n's
 high will,
 Nor struggle with the ten-fold chain of fate,
 That links thee to thy woes! Oh, rather yield,
 And wait the happier hour, when innocence
 Shall weep no more. My honour'd queen,
 The king——

Zaph. Whom styl'st thou king?

Oth. 'Tis Barbarossa.——

Zaph. Tyrant!

Does he assume the name of king?

Oth. He does.

Zaph. O title vilely purchas'd ! by the blood
Of innocence ! by treachery and murder !
May Heav'n, incens'd, pour down its vengeance on him !
Blast all his joys, and turn them into horror ;
Till phrensy rise, and bid him curse the hour
That gave his crimes their birth ! my faithful Oth-
man,

My sole surviving comfort !—Can no means be found,
To fly these black'ning horrors that surround me ?

Oth. That hope is vain ! the tyrant knows thy
hate.

Hence, day and night, his watchful guards
Surround thee. Rouse not then his anger ;
Let soft persuasion and mild eloquence
Redeem that liberty, which stern rebuke
Would rob thee of for ever.

Zaph. Cruel task !

An injur'd queen
To kneel for liberty ! and, Oh ! to whom !
Ev'n to the murd'rer of her lord and son !
O, perish first, Zaphira ! yes, I'll die !
For what is life to me ? my dear, dear lord !
My hapless child !—yes, I will follow you.

Oth. Wilt thou not see him, then !

Zaph. I will not, Othman ;
Or if I do, with bitter imprecation,
More keen than poison shot from serpents' tongues,
I'll pour my curses on him !

Oth. Will Zaphira
Thus meanly sink in woman's fruitless rage,
When she should wake revenge ?

Zaph. Revenge ?—O tell me—
Tell me but how ? what can a helpless woman ?

Oth. Gain but the tyrant's leave, and reach thy
father :

Pour thy complaints before him : let thy wrongs
Kindle his indignation, to pursue

This vile usurper, till unceasing war
Blast his ill-gotten pow'r.

Zaph. Ah!—say'st thou, Othman?
Thy words have shot like lightning thro' my frame;
And all my soul's on fire!—Thou faithful friend!
Yes—with more gentle speech I'll sooth his pride—
Regain my freedom;—reach my father's tents;
There paint my countless woes. His kindling rage
Shall wake the valleys into honest vengeance:
The sudden storm shall pour on Barbarossa;
And ev'ry glowing warrior steep his shaft
In deadlier poison, to revenge my wrongs.

Oth. There spoke the queen.—But as thou lov'st thy
freedom,
Touch not on Selim's death. Thy soul will kindle,
And passion mount in flames that will consume thee.

Zaph. My murdered son!—Yes, to revenge thy
death,
I'll speak a language which my heart disdains.

Oth. Peace, peace! the tyrant comes: Now, in-
jur'd queen,
Plead for thy freedom, hope for just revenge,
And check each rising passion. [Exit OTHMAN.]

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. Hail, sovereign fair! in whom
Beauty and majesty conspire to charm!
Behold the conqu'ror.

Zaph. O Barbarossa!
No more the pride of conquest e'er can charm
My widow'd heart! With my departed lord
My love lies bury'd!
Then turn thee to some happier fair, whose heart
May crown thy growing love with love sincere;
For I have none to give.

Bar. Love ne'er should die:
'Tis the soul's cordial;—tis the fount of life;
Therefore should spring eternal in the breast:

One object lost, another should succeed ;
And all our life be love.

Zaph. Urge me no more :—Thou might'st with
equal hope

Woo the cold marble weeping o'er a tomb,
To meet thy wishes ! But if gen'rous love
Dwell in thy breast, vouchsafe me proof sincere :
Give me safe convoy to the native vales
Of dear Mutija, where my father reigns.

Bar. Oh, blind to proffer'd bliss ! what, fondly quit
This pomp
Of empire, for an Arab's wand'ring tent !
Where the mock chieftain leads his vagrant tribes
From plain to plain, and faintly shadows out
The majesty of kings !—Far other joys
Here shall attend thy call.

To thee, exalted fair ! submissive realms !
Shall bow the neck ; and swarthy kings and queens,
From the far distant Niger and the Nile,
Drawn captive at my conqu'ring chariot wheels,
Shall kneel before thee.

Zaph. Pomp and pow'r are toys,
Which ev'n the mind at ease may well disdain,
But, ah ! what mockery is the tinsel pride
Of splendour, when, by wasting woes, the mind
Lies desolate within ;—Such, such is mine !
O'erwhelm'd with ills, and dead to every joy ;
Envy me not this last request, to die
In my dear father's tents !

Bar. Thy suit is vain—

Zaph. Thus kneeling at thy feet—I do beseech
thee.

Bar. Thou thankless fair !
Thus to repay the labours of my love !
Had I not seiz'd the throne when Selim died,
Ere this, thy foes had laid Algiers in ruin :
I check'd the warring pow'rs, and gave you peace.
Make thee but mine,

I will descend the throne, and call thy son
From banishment to empire.

Zaph. Oh, my heart!

Can I bear this?—

Inhuman tyrant! Curses on thy head!

May dire remorse and anguish haunt thy throne,

And gender in thy bosom fell despair!

Despair as deep as mine!

Bar. What means Zaphira?

What means this burst of grief?

Zaph. Thou fell destroyer!

Had not guilt steel'd thy heart, awak'ning con-
science

Would flash conviction on thee, and each look,

Shot from these eyes, be arm'd with serpent horrors,

To turn thee into stones!—Relentless man!

Who did the bloody deed? Oh, tremble, guilt,

Where'er thou art!—Look on me,—tell me, tyrant!

Who slew my blameless son?

Bar. What envious tongue

Hath dar'd to taint my name with slander?

Thy Selim lives: Nay more, he soon shall reign,

If thou consent to bless me.

Zaph. Never! Oh, never—Sooner would I roam

An unknown exile through the torrid climes

Of Afric, sooner dwell with wolves and tigers,

Than mount with thee my murder'd Selim's throne!

Bar. Rash queen, forbear! think on thy captive
state;

Remember, that within these palace walls

I am omnipotent:—Yield thee then:

Avert the gath'ring horrors that surround thee,

And dread my pow'r incens'd.

Zaph. Dares thy licentious tongue pollute mine
ear

With that foul menace!—Tyrant Dread'st thou not

Th' all-seeing eye of Heav'n, it's lifted thunder,

And all the redd'ning vengeance which it stores

For crimes like thine?—Yet know, Zaphira scorns thee.

Tho' robb'd by thee of every dear support,
No tyrant's threat can awe the free born soul,
That greatly dares to die. [Exit ZAPHIRA.

Bar. Where should she learn the tale of Selim's death?

Could Othman dare to tell it? If he did,
My rage shall sweep him, swifter than the whirlwind,
To instant death!—

Enter ALADIN.

O Aladin!

Timely thou com'st, to ease my lab'ring thought,
That swells with indignation and despair.

This stubborn woman—

Aladin. What, unconquer'd still?

Bar. The news of Selim's fate hath reach'd her ear.
Whence could this come?

Aladin. I can resolve the doubt.

A female slave, attendant on Zaphira,
O'erheard the messenger who brought the tale,
And gave it to her ear.

Bar. Perdition seize her!

Nor threats can move, nor promise now allure
Her haughty soul: Nay, she defies my pow'r;
And talks of death, as if her female form
Inshrin'd some hero's spirit.

Aladin. Let her rage foam.

I bring thee tidings that will ease thy pain.

Bar. Say'st thou?—Speak on—O give me quick relief!

Aladin. The gallant youth is come, who slew her son.

Bar. Who, Omar?

Aladin. No; unhappy Omar fell
By Selim's hand. But Achmet, whom he join'd

His brave associate, so the youth bids tell thee,
Reveng'd his death by Selim's.

Bar. Gallant youth!

Bears he the signet?

Aladin. Ay.

Bar. That speaks him true.—Conduct him, Aladin.

[*Exit* ALADIN.]

This is beyond my hope. The secret pledge
Restor'd, prevents suspicion of the deed,
While it confirms it done.

Enter SELIM *disguised as* ACHMET, *and* ALADIN.

Selim. Hail, mighty Barbarossa! As the pledge
[*Kneels.*

Of Selim's death, behold thy ring restor'd :—
That pledge will speak the rest.

Bar. Rise, valiant youth!

But first, no more a slave—I give thee freedom.
Thou art the youth, whom Omar (now no more)
Join'd his companion in this brave attempt?

Selim. I am.

Bar. Then tell me how you sped.—Where found ye
That insolent?

Selim. We found him at Oran,
Plotting deep mischief to thy throne and people.

Bar. Well ye repaid the traitor.—

Selim. As we ought.

While night drew on, we leapt upon our prey.
Full at his heart brave Omar aim'd the poignard,
Which Selim shunning, wrench'd it from his hand,
Then plung'd it in his breast. I hasted on,
Too late to save, yet I reveng'd my friend:
My thirsty dagger with repeated blows
Search'd every artery: They fell together,
Gasping in folds of mortal enmity:
And thus in frowns expir'd.

Bar. Well hast thou sped:

Thy dagger did its office, faithful Achmet!
And high reward shall wait thee.—One thing more—
Be the thought fortunate!—Go, seek the queen.
For know, the rumour of her Selim's death
Hath reach'd her ear: Hence dark suspicions rise,
Glancing at me. Go, tell her, that thou saw'st
Her son expire;—that with his dying breath,
He did conjure her to receive my vows,
And give her country peace.

Enter OTHMAN.

Most welcome Othman,
Behold this gallant stranger. He hath done
The state good service. Let some high reward
Await him, such as may o'erpay his zeal.
Conduct him to the queen, for he hath news
Worthy her ear, from her departed son;
Such as may win her love—Come, Aladin;
The banquet waits our presence;—festal joy
Laughs in the mantling goblet; and the night,
Illumin'd by the taper's dazzling beam,
Rivals departed day.

[Exeunt BARBAROSSA and ALADIN.]

Selim. What anxious thought
Rolls in thine eye, and heaves thy lab'ring breast?
Why join'st thou not the loud excess of joy,
That riots thro' the palace?

Oth. Dar'st thou tell me,
On what dark errand thou art here?

Selim. I dare.
Dost thou not perceive the savage lines of blood
Deform my visage? Read'st not in mine eye
Remorseless fury?—I am Selim's murd'rer.

Oth. Selim's murd'rer!

Selim. Start not from me.
My dagger thirsts not but for regal blood—
Why this amazement?

Oth. Amazement!—No—'tis well:—'tis as it should be—

He was indeed a foe to Barbarossa.

Selim. And therefore to Algiers:—Was it not so? Why dost thou pause? What passion shakes thy frame?

Oth. Fate, do thy worst! I can no more dissemble;

Can I unmov'd behold the murd'ring ruffian,
Smear'd with my prince's blood?—Go, tell the tyrant,
Othman defies his pow'r; that, tir'd with life,
He dares his bloody hand, and pleads to die.

Selim. What, didst thou love this Selim?

Oth. All men lov'd him.

He was of such unmix'd and blameless quality,
That envy, at his praise stood mute, nor dar'd
To sully his fair name! Remorseless tyrant!

Selim. I do commend thy faith. And since thou
lov'st him,
I'll whisper to thee, that with honest guile
I have deceiv'd this tyrant Barbarossa:
Selim is yet alive.

Oth. Alive!

Selim. Nay, more—
Selim is in Algiers.

Oth. Impossible!

Selim. Nay, if thou doubt'st, I'll bring him hither,
straight.

Oth. Not for an empire!
Thou might'st as well bring the devoted lamb
Into the tiger's den.

Selim. But I'll bring him
Hid in such deep disguise, as shall deride
Suspicion, tho' she wear the lynx's eyes.
Not even thyself couldst know him.

Oth. Yes, sure:—too sure to hazard such an awful
trial.

Selim. Yet seven revolving years, worn out

In tedious exile, may have wrought such change
Of voice and feature, in the state of youth,
As might elude thine eye.

Oth. No time can blot
The mem'ry of his sweet majestic mien,
The lustre of his eye! besides, he wears
A mark indelible, a beauteous scar,
Made on his forehead by a furious pard,
Which, rushing on his mother, Selim slew.

Selim. A scar?

Oth. Ay, on his forehead.

Selim. What, like this? [*Lifting his Turban.*

Oth. Whom do I see?—am I awake?—my prince!
[*Kneels.*

My honour'd, honour'd king!

Selim. Rise, faithful Othman:
Thus let me thank thy truth! [*Embraces him.*

Oth. O happy hour!

Selim. Why dost thou tremble thus? Why grasp
my hand?
And why that ardent gaze? Thou canst not doubt
me!

Oth. Ah, no! I see thy sire in ev'ry line.—
How did my prince escape the murd'rer's hand?

Selim. I wrench'd the dagger from him; and gave
back

That death he meant to bring. The ruffian wore
The tyrant's signet:—Take this ring, he cried,
The sole return my dying hand can make thee
For its accurst attempt: this pledge restor'd,
Will prove thee slain: Safe may'st thou see Algiers,
Unknown to all.—This said, th' assassin died.

Oth. But how to gain admittance, thus un-
known?

Selim. Disguis'd as Selim's murderer I come:
Th' accomplice of the deed: the ring restor'd,
Gain'd credence to my words.

Oth. Yet ere thou cam'st, thy death was rumour'd here.

Selim. I spread the flatt'ring tale, and sent it hither ;
That babbling rumour, like a lying dream,
Might make belief more easy. Tell me, Othman,
And yet I tremble to approach the theme,—
How fares my mother? does she still retain
Her native greatness?

Oth. Still:—in vain the tyrant
Tempts her to marriage, tho' with impious threats
Of death or violation.

Selim. May kind Heav'n
Strengthen her virtue, and by me reward it!
When shall I see her, Othman?

Oth. Yet, my prince,
I tremble for thy presence.

Selim. Let not fear
Sully thy virtue: 'tis the lot of guilt
To tremble. What hath innocence to do with fear?

Oth. Still my heart
Forebodes some dire event:—O quit these walls!

Selim. Not till a deed be done, which ev'ry tyrant
Shall tremble when he hears.

Oth. What means my prince?

Selim. To take just vengeance for a father's blood,
A mother's suff'rings, and a people's groans.

Oth. Alas, my prince! thy single arm is weak
To combat multitudes.

Selim. Therefore I come,
Clad in this murd'rer's guise—Ere morning shines,
This, Othman!—this—shall drink the tyrant's blood.

[Shows a Dagger.]

Oth. Heav'n shield thy life—Let caution rule
Thy zeal!

Selim. Nay, think not that I come
Blindly impell'd by fury or despair:
For I have seen our friends, and parted now
From Sadi and Almanzor.

Oth. Say——what hope?
My soul is all attention——

Selim. Mark me, then;
A chosen band of citizens this night
Will storm the palace: while the gluttoned troops
Lie drench'd in surfeit, the confed'rate city,
Bold thro' despair, have sworn to break their chain
By one wide slaughter. I, mean time, have gain'd
The palace, and will wait th' appointed hour,
To guard Zaphira from the tyrant's rage,
Amid the deathful uproar.

Oth. Heav'n protect thee——
'Tis dreadful——what's the hour?

Selim. I left our friends
In secret council. Ere the dead of night,
Brave Sadi will report their last resolves.—
Now lead me to the queen.——

Oth. Brave prince, beware!
Her joy's or fear's excess, would sure betray thee.
Thou shalt not see her, till the tyrant perish!

Selim. I must.—I feel some secret impulse urge me.
Who knows that 'tis not the last parting interview,
We ever shall obtain?

Oth. Then, on thy life,
Do not reveal thyself.——Assume the name
Of Selim's friend; sent to confirm her virtue,
And warn her that he lives.

Selim. It shall be so; I yield me to thy will.

Oth. Thou greatly daring youth! May angels
watch,
And guard thy upright purpose! That Algiers
May reap the blessings of a virtuous reign,
And all thy godlike father shine in thee!

Selim. Oh, thou hast rous'd a thought, on which
revenge
Mounts with redoubled fire!—Yes, here, even here,—
Beneath this very roof, my honour'd father

Shed round his blessings, till accursed treach'ry
Stole on his peaceful hour! O, blessed shade!

[*Kneels.*

If yet thou hover'st o'er thy once lov'd clime,
Now aid me to redress thy bleeding wrongs!
Infuse thy mighty spirit into my breast,
Thy firm and dauntless fortitude, unaw'd
By peril, pain, or death! that, undismay'd,
I may pursue the just intent, and dare
Or bravely to revenge, or bravely die.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Palace.

Enter IRENE.

Irene. Can air-drawn visions mock the waking eye?
It was his image!—
This way, sure, he mov'd.
But, oh, how chang'd! He wears no gentle smiles,
But terror in his frown. He comes—'Tis he:—
For Othman points him thither, and departs.
Disguis'd, he seeks the queen: secure, perhaps,
And heedless of the ruin that surrounds him.
O, generous Selim! can I see thee thus;
And not forewarn such virtue of its fate!
Forbid it gratitude!

Enter SELIM.

Selim. Be still, ye sighs!

Ye struggling tears of filial love, be still.
Down, down, fond heart!

Irene. Why, stranger, dost thou wander here?

Selim. Oh, ruin! [Shunning her.]

Irene. Bless'd is Irene! Blest if Selim lives!

Selim. Am I betray'd!

Irene. Betray'd to whom? To her
Whose grateful heart would rush on death to save
thee!

Selim. It was my hope
That time had veil'd all semblance of my youth,
And thrown the mask of manhood o'er my visage.—
Am I then known?

Irene. To none, but love and me—
To me, who late beheld thee at Oran;
Who saw thee here, beset with unseen peril,
And flew to save the guardian of my honour.

Selim. Thou sum of ev'ry worth! Thou heav'n of
sweetness!
How could I pour forth all my soul before thee.
In vows of endless truth!—It must not be!—
This is my destin'd goal!—The mansion drear,
Where grief and anguish dwell! where bitter tears,
And sighs and lamentations choke the voice,
And quench the flame of love!

Irene. Yet, virtuous prince,
Though love be silent, gratitude may speak.
Hear, then, her voice, which warns thee from these
walls.

Mine be the grateful task, to tell the queen,
Her Selim lives. Ruin and death inclose thee.
O, speed thee hence, while yet destruction sleeps!

Selim. Would it were possible!

Irene. What can prevent it?

Selim. Justice! Fate, and justice!
A murder'd father's wrongs!

Irene. Justice, said'st thou?
That word hath struck me, like a peal of thunder!

Thine eye, which wont to melt with gentle love,
 Now glares with terror! Thy approach by night—
 Thy dark disguise, thy looks and fierce demeanour,
 Yes, all conspire to tell me, I am lost!
 Ah! prince, take heed! I have a father too!
 Think, Selim, what Irene must endure,
 Should she be guilty of a father's blood!

Selim. Come on, then. Lead me to him. Glut thine
 eye

With Selim's blood——

Irene. Was e'er distress like mine!

O, Selim, can I see my father perish!

Quit, O quit these walls!

Heav'n will ordain some gentler, happier means,

To heal thy woes! Thy dark attempt is big

With horror and destruction! Generous prince!

Resign thy dreadful purpose, and depart!

Selim. May not I see Zaphira, ere I go?

Thy gentle pity will not, sure, deny us

The mournful pleasure of a parting tear?

Irene. Go, then, and give her peace. But fly these
 walls,

As soon as morning shines:—Else, though despair

Drives me to madness;—yet—to save a father!—

O, Selim! spare my tongue the horrid sentence!—

Fly! ere destruction seize thee! [Exit IRENE.]

Selim. Death and ruin!

Must I then fly?—what!—coward-like betray

My father, mother, friends! Vain terrors, hence!

Danger looks big to fear's deluded eye:

But courage, on the heights and steeps of fate,

Dares snatch her glorious purpose from the edge

Of peril: and, while sick'ning caution shrinks,

Or, self betray'd, falls headlong down the steep;

Calm resolution, unappall'd, can walk

The giddy brink, secure.—Now to the queen.—

How shall I dare to meet her thus unknown!

How stifle the warm transports of my heart,

That pants at her approach!—
Who waits Zaphira?

Enter a female SLAVE.

Slave. Whence this intrusion, stranger? at an hour
Destin'd to rest?

Selim. I come, to seek the queen,
On matter of such import, as may claim
Her speedy audience.

Slave. Thy request is vain.
Ev'n now the queen hath heard the mournful tale
Of her son's death, and drown'd in grief she lies.
Thou canst not see her.

Selim. Tell the queen, I come
On message from her dear, departed son;
And bring his last request.

Slave. I'll haste to tell her. [*Exit SLAVE.*]

Selim. O, ill dissembling heart!—My ev'ry limb
Trembles with grateful terror!—'Would to Heav'n
I had not come! Some look, or starting tear,
Will sure betray me—Honest guile assist
My falt'ring tongue!

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. Where is this pious stranger?
Say, generous youth, whose pity leads thee thus
To seek the weeping mansions of distress!
Didst thou behold in death my hapless son?
Didst thou receive my Selim's parting breath?
Did he remember me?

Selim. Most honour'd queen!
Thy son,—forgive these gushing tears that flow
To see distress like thine!

Zaph. I thank thy pity!
'Tis generous thus to feel for others' woe!—
What of my son? Say, didst thou see him die?

Selim. By Barbarossa's dread command I come,
To tell thee, that these eyes alone beheld

Thy son expire.

Zaph. Relentless fate!—that I should be denied
The mournful privilege to see him die!
To clasp him in the agony of death,
And catch his parting soul! Oh, tell me all,
All that he said and look'd? Deep in my heart
That I may treasure ev'ry parting word,
Each dying whisper of my dear, dear son!

Selim. Let not my words offend.—What if he said,
Go, tell my hapless mother, that her tears
Have stream'd too long: Then bid her weep no more:
Bid her forget the husband and the son,
In Barbarossa's arms!

Zaph. O, basely false!
Thou art some creeping slave to Barbarossa,
Sent to surprise my unsuspecting heart!
Vile slave, begone!—My son betray me thus!—
Could he have e'er conceiv'd so base a purpose,
My griefs for him should end in great disdain!—
But he was brave, and scorn'd a thought so vile!
Wretched Zaphira! How art thou become
The sport of slaves!—

Selim. Yet hope for peace, unhappy queen! Thy
woes
May yet have end.

Zaph. Why weep'st thou, crocodile?
Thy treacherous tears are vain.

Selim. My tears are honest.
I am not what thou think'st.

Zaph. What art thou then?

Selim. Oh, my full heart!—I am—thy friend, and
Selim's.

I come not to insult, but heal thy woes——
Now check thy heart's wild tumult, while I tell thee—
Perhaps—thy son yet lives.

Zaph. Lives! O, gracious Heav'n!
Do I not dream? say, stranger,—didst thou tell me,
Perhaps my Selim lives?—What do I ask?

Wild, wild, and fruitless hope!—What mortal pow'r
Can e'er reanimate his mangled corse,
Shoot life into the cold and silent tomb,
Or bid the ruthless grave give up its dead?

Selim. O, pow'rful nature! thou wilt sure betray
me! [Aside.

Thy Selim lives: for since his rumour'd death,
I saw him at Oran.

Zaph. O, generous youth, who art thou?—From
what clime

Comes such exalted virtue, as dares give
A pause to grief like mine?

Selim. A friendless youth, self banish'd with thy son;
Long his companion in distress and danger:
One who rever'd thy worth in prosp'rous days,
And more reveres thy virtue in distress.

Zaph. O, gentle stranger!—Mock not my woes,
But tell me truly,—does my Selim live?

Selim. He does, by Heav'n!

Zaph. O generous Heaven! thou at length o'er-
pay'st

My bitterest pangs, if my dear Selim lives!

And does he still remember

His father's wrongs, and mine!

Selim. He bade me tell thee,
That in his heart indelibly are stamp'd
His father's wrongs, and thine: that he but waits
Till awful justice may unsheath her sword,
And lust and murder tremble at her frown!
That, till the arrival of that happy hour,
Deep in his soul the hidden fire shall glow,
And his breast labour with the great revenge!

Zaph. Eternal blessings crown my virtuous son!

Selim. Much honour'd queen, farewell.

Zaph. Not yet,—not yet;—indulge a mother's love!
In thee, the kind companion of his griefs,
Methinks I see my Selim stand before me.
Depart not yet. A thousand fond requests

Crowd on my mind. Wishes, and pray'rs, and tears,
Are all I have to give. O, bear him these!

Selim. Take comfort then; for know, thy son,
o'erjoy'd

To rescue thee, would bleed at ev'ry vein!—

Bid her, he said, yet hope we may be bless'd!

Bid her remember that the ways of Heav'n,

Though dark, are just: that oft some guardian pow'r
Attends, unseen, to save the innocent!

But if high Heaven decrees our fall!—Oh, bid her
Firmly to wait the stroke, prepar'd alike

To live or die! and then he wept as I do.

Zaph. O, righteous Heaven!

Protect his tender years!

Be thou his guide through dangers and distress!

Soften the rigours of his cruel exile,

And lead him to his throne!

[*Exit.*

Selim. Now swelling heart,

Indulge the luxury of grief! flow tears!

And rain down transport in the shape of sorrow!

Yes, I have sooth'd her woes; have found her noble:

And, to have giv'n this respite to her pangs,

O'erpays all pain and peril!—Pow'rful virtue!

How infinite thy joys, when even thy griefs

Are pleasing!—Thou, superior to the frowns

Of fate, canst pour thy sunshine o'er the soul,

And brighten woe to rapture!

Enter OTHMAN and SADI.

Honour'd friends!

How goes the night?

Sadi. 'Tis well nigh midnight.

Oth. What! in tears, my prince?

Selim. But tears of joy: for I have seen Zaphira,
And pour'd the balm of peace into her breast:

Think not these tears unnerve me, valiant friends;

They have but harmoniz'd my soul; and wak'd

All that is man within me, to disdain

Peril, or death.—What tidings from the city?

Sadi. All, all is ready. Our confed'rate friends
Burn with impatience, till the hour arrive.

Selim. What is the signal of th' appointed hour?

Sadi. The midnight watch gives signal of our meeting:

And when the second watch of night is rung,
The work of death begins.

Selim. Speed, speed ye minutes!
Now let the rising whirlwind shake Algiers,
And justice guide the storm! Scarce two hours
hence—

Sadi. Scarce more than one.

Selim. Oh, as ye love my life,
Let your zeal hasten on the great event:
The tyrant's daughter found, and knew me here:
And half suspects the cause.

Oth. Too daring prince,
Retire with us! her fears will sure betray thee!

Selim. What! leave my helpless mother here a prey
To cruelty and lust—I'll perish first:
This very night the tyrant threatens violence:
I'll watch his steps: I'll haunt him through the palace:

And, should he meditate a deed so vile,
I'll hover o'er him, like an unseen pestilence,
And blast him in his guilt!

Sadi. Intrepid prince!
Worthy of empire!—Yet accept my life,
My worthless life: do thou retire with Othman;
I will protect Zaphira.

Selim. Think'st thou, Sadi,
That when the trying hour of peril comes,
Selim will shrink into a common man!
Worthless were he to rule, who dares not claim
Pre-eminence in danger. Urge no more:
Here shall my station be; and, if I fall,

O, friends, let me have vengeance!—Tell me now,
Where is the tyrant?

Oth. Revelling at the banquet.

Selim. 'Tis good. Now tell me how our pow'rs are
destin'd?

Sadi. Near ev'ry port, a secret band is posted :
By these, the watchful centinels must perish :
The rest is easy ; for the gluttoned troops
Lie drown'd in sleep.

Almanzor, with his friends, will circle round
The avenues of the palace. Othman and I
Will join our brave confederates (all sworn
To conquer or to die), and burst the gates
Of this foul den. Then tremble, Barbarossa !

Selim. Oh, how the approach of this great hour
Fires all my soul ! but, valiant friends, I charge you,
Reserve the murd'rer to my just revenge ;
My poignard claims his blood.

Oth. Forgive me, prince !
Forgive my doubts !—Think—should the fair Irene—

Selim. Thy doubts are vain. I would not spare the
tyrant,

Though the sweet maid lay weeping at my feet ;
Nay, should he fall by any hand but mine,
By Heav'n, I'd think my honour'd father's blood
Scarce half reveng'd ! My love, indeed, is strong !
But love shall yield to justice !

Sadi. Gallant prince,
Bravely resolv'd !

Selim. But is the city quiet ?

Sadi. All, all, is hush'd. Throughout the empty
streets,

Nor voice, nor sound ; as if th' inhabitants,
Like the presaging herds, that seek the covert
Ere the loud thunder rolls, had inly felt
And shunn'd th' impending uproar.

Oth. There is a solemn horror in the night, too,

That pleases me; a general pause through nature:
The winds are hush'd——

Sadi. And, as I pass'd the beach,
The lazy billow scarce could lash the shore:
No star peeps through the firmament of heav'n——

Selim. And, lo! where eastward, o'er the sullen
wave,

The waning moon, depriv'd of half her orb,
Rises in blood: her beam, well nigh extinct,
Faintly contends with darkness—— [Bell tolls.
Hark!—what meant
That tolling bell?

Oth. It sounds the midnight watch.

Sadi. This was the signal——

Come, Othman, we are call'd: the passing minutes
Chide our delay: brave Othman, let us hence.

Selim. One last embrace!—nor doubt, but crown'd
with glory,

We soon shall meet again. But, oh, remember—
Amid the tumult's rage, remember mercy!
Stain not a righteous cause with guiltless blood!
Warn our brave friends, that we unsheath the sword,
Not to destroy, but save! nor let blind zeal,
Or wanton cruelty, e'er turn its edge
On age or innocence! or bid us strike
Where the most pitying angel in the skies,
That now looks on us from his bless'd abode,
Would wish that we should spare.

Oth. So may we prosper,
As mercy shall direct us!

Selim. Farewell, friends!

Sadi. Intrepid prince, farewell!

[*Exeunt* OTHMAN and SADI.]

Selim. Now sleep and silence
Brood o'er the city.—The devoted centinel
Now takes his lonely stand, and idly dreams
Of that to-morrow he shall never see.
In this dread interval, O busy thought,

From outward things descend into thyself!
Search deep my heart! bring with thee awful con-
science,
And firm resolve! that, in th' approaching hour
Of blood and horror, I may stand unmov'd;
Nor fear to strike where justice calls, nor dare
To strike where she forbids!
Witness, ye pow'rs of Heav'n,
That not from you, but from the murd'rer's eye,
I wrap myself in night!—To you I stand
Reveal'd in noon-tide day!—Oh, could I arm
My hand with pow'r! then, like to you, array'd
In storm and fire, my swift-avenging thunder
Should blast this tyrant. But since fate denies
That privilege, I'll seize on what it gives:
Like the deep-cavern'd earthquake, burst beneath
him,
And whelm his throne, his empire, and himself,
In one prodigious ruin! [Exit.]

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter IRENE and ALADIN.

Irene. But didst thou tell him, Aladin, my fears
Brook no delay.

Aladin. I did.

Irene. Why comes he not!
Oh, what a dreadful dream!—"Twas surely more

Than troubled fancy: never was my soul
Shook with such hideous phantoms!—Still he lingers!
Return, return; and tell him, that his daughter
Dies, till she warn him of his threat'ning ruin.

Aladin. Behold, he comes. [Exit ALADIN.]

Enter BARBAROSSA and GUARDS.

Bar. Thou bane of all my joys!
Some gloomy planet surely rul'd thy birth!
Ev'n now thy ill-tim'd fear suspends the banquet,
And damps the festal hour.

Irene. Forgive my fear!

Bar. What fear, what phantom hath possess'd thy
brain?

Irene. Oh, guard thee from the terrors of this night;
For terrors lurk unseen.

Bar. What terror? speak.

Say, what thou dread'st, and why! I have a soul
To meet the blackest dangers undismay'd.

Irene. Let not my father check, with stern rebuke,
The warning voice of nature. For ev'n now,
Retir'd to rest, soon as I clos'd mine eyes,
A horrid vision rose—Methought I saw
Young Selim rising from the silent tomb:
Mangled and bloody was his corse: his hair
Clotted with gore; his glaring eyes on fire!
Dreadful he shook a dagger in his hand.
By some mysterious pow'r he rose in air;
When, lo! at his command, this yawning roof
Was cleft in twain, and gave the phantom entrance!
Swift he descended with terrific brow,
Rush'd on my guardless father at the banquet,
And plung'd his furious dagger in thy breast!

Bar. Wouldst thou appal me by a brain-sick vi-
sion?

Get thee to rest.

Irene. Yet hear me, dearest father!

Bar. Provoke me not.—

Irene. What shall I say, to move him?
Merciful Heav'n, instruct me what to do!

Enter ALADIN.

Bar. What means thy looks?—Why dost thou gaze
so wildly?

Aladin. I hasted to inform thee, that ev'n now,
Rounding the watch, I met the brave Abdalla,
Breathless with tidings of a rumour dark,
That young Selim is yet alive—

Bar. May plagues consume the tongue
That broach'd the falsehood!—'Tis not possible—
What did he tell thee further!

Aladin. More he said not:
Save only, that the spreading rumour wak'd
A spirit of revolt.

Irene. O gracious father!

Bar. The rumour's false—And yet, your coward
fears

Infect me!—What!—shall I be terrified
By midnight visions?—I'll not believe it.

Aladin. But this gathering rumour—
Think but on that, my lord;

Bar. Infernal darkness
Swallow the slave that rais'd it!—Hark thee, Aladin,
Find out this stranger, Achmet; and forthwith
Let him be brought before me.

[*Exeunt Two GUARDS.*]

Irene. O my father!
I do conjure thee, as thou lov'st thy life,
Retire, and trust thee to thy faithful guards—
See not this Achmet.

Bar. Not see him?
If he prove false,—if hated Selim live,
I'll heap such vengeance on him—

Irene. Mercy! mercy!

Bar. Mercy—To whom?

Irene. To me—and to thyself:

To him—to all.—Thou think'st I rave; yet true
My visions are, as ever prophet utter'd,
When Heaven inspires his tongue!

Bar. Ne'er did the moon-struck madman rave with
dreams
More wild than thine!—Get thee to rest;
Call Achmet hither.

Irene. Thus prostrate on my knees:—O see him
not,
Selim is dead:—Indeed the rumour's false,
There is no danger near:—Or, if there be,
Achmet is innocent!

Bar. Off, frantic wretch!
Hence—to thy chamber, on thy duty hence!

Irene. Cruel fate!
What have I done?—Heav'n shield my dearest father!
Heaven shield the innocent—undone Irene!
Whate'er the event, thy doom is misery.

[*Exit* IRENE.]

Bar. Her words are wrapt in darkness.—Aladin,
Forthwith send Achmet hither.—Then with speed,
Double the centinels
Infernal guilt!

[*Exit* ALADIN.]

How dost thou rise in ev'ry hideous shape,
Of rage and doubt, suspicion and despair,
To rend my soul! more wretched far than they,
Made wretched by my crimes!—Why did I not
Repent, while yet my crimes were delible!
Ere they had struck their colours thro' my soul,
As black as night or hell!—tis now too late!
Hence then, ye vain repinings!—Take me all,
Unfeeling guilt! Oh, banish, if thou canst,
This fell remorse, and ev'ry fruitless fear!

Enter SELIM and Two GUARDS.

Come hither, slave!

Hear me, and tremble! Art thou what thou seem'st?

Selim. Ha!—

Bar. Dost thou pause?—By hell, the slave's confounded!

Selim. That Barbarossa should suspect my truth!

Bar. Take heed! for by the hov'ring pow'rs of vengeance,

If I do find thee treach'rous, I will doom thee
To death and torment, such as human thought
Ne'er yet conceiv'd! Thou com'st beneath the guise
Of Selim's murderer.—Now tell me:—Is not
That Selim yet alive?

Selim. Selim alive!

Bar. Perdition on thee! dost thou echo me?

Answer me quick, or die! [*Draws his Dagger.*]

Selim. Yes, freely strike—

Already hast thou given the fatal wound,
And pierc'd my heart with thy unkind suspicion;
Oh, could my dagger find a tongue, to tell
How deep it drank his blood!—But since thy doubt
Thus wrongs my zeal,—Behold my breast—strike
here—

For bold is innocence.

Bar. I scorn the task, [*Puts up his Dagger.*]
Time shall decide thy doom:—Guards, mark me
well.—

See that ye watch the motions of this slave:
And if he meditates t' escape your eye,
Let your good sabres cleave him to the chine.

Selim. I yield me to thy will, and when thou
know'st
That Selim lives, or see'st his hated face,
Then wreak thy vengeance on me.

Bar. Bear him hence.—

Yet, on your lives, await me within call.—
I will have deeper inquisition made.

[*Exeunt SELIM and GUARDS.*]

Call Zaphira.

[*Exit a SLAVE.*]

If Selim lives—then what is Barbarossa?

My throne's a bubble, that but floats in air,

Till marriage rites declare Zaphira mine.
I will not brook delay.—By love and vengeance,
This hour decides her fate;

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Well, haughty fair!—
Hath reason yet subdu'd thee?—Wilt thou hear
The voice of love?

Zaph. Why dost thou vainly urge me?
Thou know'st my fix'd resolve.

Bar. Can aught but phrensy
Rush on perdition?

Zaph. Therefore shall no pow'r
E'er make me thine?

Bar. Nay, sport not with my rage:
Know, that thy final hour of choice is come!

Zaph. I have no choice.—Think'st thou I e'er will
wed
The murderer of my lord?

Bar. Take heed, rash queen!
Tell me thy last resolve.

Zaph. Then hear me, Heav'n!
Hear, all ye pow'rs, that watch o'er innocence!
Angels of light! And thou dear honour'd shade
Of my departed lord: attend, while here
I ratify with vows my last resolve.
If e'er I wed this tyrant murderer,
If I pollute me with this horrid union,
May ye, the ministers of Heav'n, depart,
Nor shed your influence on the guilty scene!
May horror blacken all our days and nights!
May discord light the nuptial torch! and rising
From hell, may swarming fiends in triumph howl
Around th' accursed bed!

Bar. Begone, remorse!—
Guards do your office: Drag her to the altar—
Heed not her tears or cries.—What! dare ye doubt?

[GUARDS go to seize ZAPHIRA.]

Zaph. O spare me!—Heav'n protect me!—O my son,
Wert thou but here, to save thy helpless mother!—
What shall I do?—Undone, undone Zaphira!

Enter SELIM.

Selim. Who call'd on Achmet?—Did not Barbarossa
Require me here?

Bar. Officious slave, retire!
I call'd thee not.

Zaph. O kind and gen'rous stranger, lend thy aid!
O rescue me from these impending horrors!
Heav'n will reward thy pity!

Selim. Pity her woes, O mighty Barbarossa!

Bar. Rouse not my vengeance, slave!

Selim. O hear me, hear me! [Kneels.

Bar. Curse on thy forward zeal!

Selim. Yet, yet have mercy.

[Lays hold of BARBAROSSA'S Garment.

Bar. Presuming slave, begone! [Strikes SELIM.

Selim. Nay, then,—die, tyrant!

[Rises and aims to stab BARBAROSSA, who wrests
his Dagger from him.

Bar. Ah, traitor! have I caught thee?
Perfidious wretch, who art thou?—Bring the rack:
Let that extort the secrets of his heart.

Selim. Thy impious threats are lost! I know, that
death

And torments are my doom.—Yet, ere I die,
I'll strike thy soul with horror.—Off, vile habit!
If thou dar'st,
Now view me!—Hear me, tyrant!—while with voice
More terrible than thunder, I proclaim,
That he, who aim'd the dagger at thy heart,
Is Selim!

Zaph. O Heav'n! my son! my son!

Selim. Unhappy mother! [Runs to embrace her.

Bar. Tear them asunder. [*GUARDS separate them.*]

Selim. Barb'rous, barb'rous ruffians !

Bar. Slaves, seize the traitor.

[*They offer to seize him.*]

Selim. Off, ye vile slaves ! I am your king !—Retire,

And tremble at my frowns ! That is the traitor—
That is the murd'rer—tyrant ravisher ! Seize him,
And do your country right !

Bar. Ah, coward dogs !

Start ye at words ?—or seize him, or by hell,
This dagger sends you all—— [*They seize him.*]

Selim. Dost thou revive, unhappy queen !

Now arm my soul with patience !

Zaph. My dear son !

Do I then live, once more to see my *Selim* !

But Oh—to see thee thus !——

Selim. Canst thou behold

Her speechless agonies, and not relent !

Zaph. O mercy, mercy !

Selim. Lo, *Barbarossa* ! thou at length hast conquer'd !

Behold a hapless prince, o'erwhelm'd with woes,

[*Kneels.*]

Prostrate before thy feet !—not for myself

I plead——Yes, plunge the dagger in my breast !

Tear, tear, me piecemeal ! But, O, spare *Zaphira* !

Yet—yet relent ! force not her matron honour !

Reproach not Heav'n.

Bar. Have I then bent thy pride ?

Why, this is conquest ev'n beyond my hope !—

Lie there, thou slave ! lie, till *Zaphira's* cries

Arouse thee from thy posture !

Selim. Dost thou insult my griefs ?—unmanly wretch !

Curse on the fear, that could betray my limbs,

[*Rising.*]

My coward limbs, to this dishonest posture ;

Long have I scorn'd, I now defy, thy pow'r!

Bar. I'll put thy boasted virtue to the trial.—
Slaves, bear him to the rack.

Zaph. O spare my son!
Sure filial virtue never was a crime!
Save but my son!—I yield me to thy wish!
What do I say?—The marriage vow—O horror!
This hour shall make me thine!—

Selim. What! doom thyself
The guilty partner of a murd'rer's bed,
Whose hands yet reek with thy dear husband's blood!
To be the mother of destructive tyrants—
The curses of mankind!—By Heav'n, I swear,
The guilty hour, that gives thee to the arms
Of that detested murderer, shall end
This hated life!

Bar. Or yield thee, or he dies!

Zaph. The conflict's past.—I will resume my greatness;
We'll bravely die, as we have liv'd,—with honour!
[Embracing.]

Selim. Now, tyrant, pour thy fiercest fury on us:
Now see, despairing guilt! that virtue still
Shall conquer, tho' in ruin.

Bar. Drag them hence:
Her to the altar:—Selim to his fate.

Zaph. O Selim! O my son!—Thy doom is death!
'Would it were mine!

Selim. 'Would I could give it thee!
Is there no means to save her? Lend, ye guards,
Ye ministers of death, in pity lend
Your swords, or some kind weapon of destruction!
Sure the most mournful boon, that ever son
Ask'd for the best of mothers!
One last embrace!
Farewell! Farewell for ever!

[GUARDS struggle with them]

Zaph. One moment yet!—Pity a mother's pangs!
O Selim!

Selim. O my mother!

[*Exeunt* SELIM, ZAPHIRA, and GUARDS.]

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

The Palace.

Enter BARBAROSSA, ALADIN, and GUARDS.

Bar. Is the watch doubled? Are the gates secur'd
Against surprise?

Aladin. They are, and mock th' attempt
Of force or treachery.

Bar. This whisper'd rumour
Of dark conspiracy,
Seems but a false alarm. Our spies, sent out,
Affirm, that sleep
Has wrapp'd the city.

Aladin. But while Selim lives,
Destruction lurks within the palace walls.

Bar. Right, Aladin. His hour of fate approaches.
How goes the night?

Aladin. The second watch is near.

Bar. 'Tis well;—Whene'er it rings, the traitor dies.
Yet first the rack shall rend
Each secret from his heart.
Haste, seek out Othman:

Go, tell him, that destruction and the sword
 Hang o'er young Selim's head, if swift compliance
 Plead not his pardon. [Exit ALADIN.
 Stubborn fortitude !
 Had he not interposed, success had crown'd
 My love, now hopeless.—Then let vengeance seize
 him.

Enter IRENE.

Irene. O night of horror!—Hear me, honour'd
 father!

If e'er Irene's peace was dear to thee,
 Now hear me !

Bar. Impious ! dar'st thou disobey ?
 Did not my sacred will ordain thee hence ?
 Get thee to rest ; for death is stirring here.

Irene. O fatal words ! By ev'ry sacred tie,
 Recal the dire decree.—

Bar. What would'st thou say ?
 Whom plead for ?

Irene. For a brave unhappy prince,
 Sentenc'd to die.

Bar. And justly !—But this hour
 The traitor half fulfill'd thy dream, and aim'd
 His dagger at my heart.

Irene. Might pity plead !

Bar. What ! plead for treachery ?

Irene. Yet pity might bestow a milder name.
 Wouldst thou not love the child, whose fortitude
 Should hazard life for thee ?—Oh, think on that :—
 The noble mind hates not a virtuous foe :
 His gen'rous purpose was to save a mother !

Bar. Damn'd was his purpose : and accurst art
 thou,

Whose perfidy would save the dark assassin,
 Who sought thy father's life !—Hence, from my sight.

Irene. Oh, never, till thy mercy spare my Selim !

Bar. Thy Selim ? Thine ?

Irene. Thou know'st—by gratitude
He's mine—Had not his gen'rous hand redeem'd me,
What then had been Irene? Oh!
Who sav'd me from dishonour?

Bar. By the pow'rs
Of great revenge, thy fond entreaties seal
His instant death.—In him I'll punish thee.—
Away!

Irene. Yet hear me! Ere my tortur'd soul
Rush on some deed of horror?

Bar. Convey the frantic idiot from my presence:
See that she do no violence on herself.

Irene. O Selim!—generous youth!—how have my
fears

Betray'd thee to destruction!
Inhuman Father!—Generous, injur'd prince!
Methinks I see thee stretch'd upon the rack,
Hear thy expiring groans:—O horror! horror!
What shall I do to save him!—Vain, alas!
Vain are my tears and pray'rs—At least, I'll die.
Death shall unite us yet! [Exit IRENE.

Bar. O torment! torment!
Ev'n in the midst of pow'r!—the vilest slave
More happy far than I!—the very child,
Whom my love cherish'd from her infant years,
Conspires to blast my peace!—O false ambition,
Whither hast thou lur'd me!
Ev'n to this giddy height; where now I stand,
Forsaken, comfortless! with not a friend,
In whom my soul can trust!

Enter ALADIN.

Now, Aladin,
Hast thou seen Othman?
He will not, sure, conspire against my peace?

Aladin. He's fled, my lord. I dread some lurking ruin.
The centinel on watch says, that he pass'd
The gate, since midnight, with an unknown friend:
And, as they pass'd, Othman in whisper said,

Now farewell, bloody tyrant!

Bar. Slave, thou liest.

He did not dare to say it; or, if he did,

Why dost thou wound my ear

By the foul repetition?

What's to be done? Some mischief lurks unseen.

Aladin. Prevent it then—

Bar. By Selim's instant death—

Aladin. Ay, doubtless.

Bar. Is the rack prepar'd?

Aladin. 'Tis ready.

Along the ground he lies, o'erwhelm'd with chains.

The ministers of death stand round; and wait

Thy last command.

Bar. Once more I'll try to bend

His stubborn soul.—Conduct me forthwith to him;

And if he now refuse my proffer'd kindness,

Destruction swallows him!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Prison in the Palace.

SELIM *discovered in Chains*, EXECUTIONERS, OFFI-
CERS, &c. *and Rack.*

Selim. I pray you, friends,

When I am dead, let not indignity

Insult these poor remains, see them interr'd

Close by my father's tomb! I ask no more.

Offi. They shall.

Selim. How goes the night?

Offi. Thy hour of fate,

The second watch, is near.

Selim. Let it come on;

I am prepar'd.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. So—raise him from the ground.

[*They raise him.*]

Perfidious boy! behold the just rewards

Of guilt and treachery ! Didst thou not give
Thy forfeit life, whene'er I should behold
Selim's detested face ?

Selim. Then take it, tyrant.

Bar. Didst thou not aim a dagger at my heart ?

Selim. I did.

Bar. Yet Heav'n defeated thy intent ;
And sav'd me from the dagger.

Selim. 'Tis not ours
To question Heav'n. Th' intent and not the deed
Is in our pow'r ; and therefore who dares greatly,
Does greatly.

Bar. Yet bethink thee, stubborn boy,
What horrors now surround thee—

Selim. Think'st thou, tyrant,
I came so ill prepar'd ?—Thy rage is weak,
Thy torments pow'rless o'er the steady mind :
He, who can bravely dare, can bravely suffer.

Bar. Yet, lo, I come, by pity led, to spare thee.
Relent, and save Zaphira !—For the bell
Ev'n now expects the centinel, to toll
The signal of thy death.

Selim. Let guilt like thine
Tremble at death : I scorn its darkest frown.
Hence, tyrant, nor prophane my dying hour !

Bar. Then take thy wish. [Bell tolls.]
There goes the fatal knell.

Thy fate is seal'd.—Not all thy mother's tears,
Nor pray'rs, nor eloquence of grief, shall save thee
From instant death. [Exit BARBAROSSA.]

Selim. Come on, then. [They bind him.]
Begin the work of death—what ! bound with cords,
Like a vile criminal !—O valiant friends,
When will ye give me vengeance !

Enter IRENE.

Irene. Stop, O, stop !
Hold your accursed hands !—On me, on me

Pour all your torments ;—How shall I approach thee.

Selim. These are thy father's gifts!—Yet thou art
guiltless;

Then let me take thee to my heart, thou best
Most amiable of women!

Irene. Rather curse me,
As the betrayer of thy virtue!

Selim. Ah!

Irene. 'Twas I,—my fears, my frantic fears, betray'd
thee!

Thus falling at thy feet! may I but hope
For pardon ere I die!

Selim. Hence to thy father!

Irene. Never, O never!—crawling in the dust,
I'll clasp thy feet, and bathe them with my tears!
Tread me to earth! I never will complain;
But my last breath shall bless thee!

Selim. Lov'd Irene!

What hath my fury done?

Irene. Canst thou, then,
Forgive and pity me?

Selim. I do, I do.

Irene. O earth and Heav'n! that such unequal'd
worth

Should meet so hard a fate!—That I—That I—
Whom his love rescu'd from the depth of woe,
Should be th' accurst destroyer!—Strike, in pity,
And end this hated life!

Selim. Cease, dear Irene.

Submit to Heaven's high will.—I charge thee live;
And to thy utmost pow'r, protect from wrong
My helpless, friendless mother!

Irene. With my life
I'll shield her from each wrong.—That hope alone
Can tempt me to prolong a life of woe!

Selim. O my ungovern'd rage!—To frown on thee!
'Thus let me expiate the cruel wrong. [Embracing,
And mingle rapture with the pains of death!

Offi. No more—Prepare the rack.

Irene. Here will I cling. No pow'r on earth shall
part us,
Till I have sav'd my Selim!

[*A Shout. Clashing of Swords.*

Aladin. [*Without.*] Arm, arm!—Treach'ry and
murder!

Selim. Off, slaves!—Or I will turn my chains to
arms,
And dash you piece-meal!

Enter ALADIN.

Aladin. Where is the king?
The foe pours in. The palace gates are burst:
The centinels are murder'd! Save the King;
They seek him thro' the palace!

Offi. Death and ruin!
Follow me, slaves, and save him.

[*Exeunt ALADIN, OFFICER, and GUARDS.*

Selim. Now, bloody tyrant! Now, thy hour is come!
Vengeance at length hath pierc'd these guilty walls,
And walks her deadly round!

Irene. Whom dost thou mean! my father?

[*Clash of Swords.*
Hark!'twas the clash of swords! Heav'n save my father!
O cruel, cruel Selim!

[*Exit IRENE.*

Selim. Curse on this servile chain, that binds me fast
In pow'rless ignominy; while my sword
Should haunt its prey, and cleave the tyrant down!

Oth. [*Without.*] Where is the prince?

Selim. Here, Othman, bound to earth!
Set me but free!—O cursed, cursed chain!

Enter OTHMAN and Party, who free SELIM.

Oth. O my brave prince!—Heav'n favours our
design.

[*Embraces him.*

Take that:—I need not bid thee use it nobly.

[*Giving him a Sword.*

Selim. Now; Barbarossa, let my arm meet thine:
'Tis all I ask of Heav'n! [Exit SELIM.]

Oth. Guard ye the prince— [Part go out.
Pursue his steps.—Now this way let us turn,
And seek the tyrant. [Exeunt OTHMAN, &c.]

SCENE III.

A Court in the Palace.

Enter BARBAROSSA.

Bar. Empire is lost, and life: yet brave revenge
Shall close my life in glory.

Enter OTHMAN.

Have I found thee,
Dissembling traitor?—Die!—

[They fight.—BARB. falls.]

Enter SELIM and SADI.

Selim. The foe gives way: sure this way went the
storm.

Where is the tiger fled!—What do I see!

Sadi. Algiers is free!

Oth. This sabre did the deed!

Selim. I envy thee the blow!—Yet valour scorns
To wound the fallen.—But if life remain,
I will speak daggers to his guilty soul—
Hoa! Barbarossa! Tyrant, murderer!
'Tis Selim, Selim calls thee.

Bar. Off, ye fiends!
Torment me not!—O Selim art thou there?—
Swallow me, earth!
Oh, that I ne'er had wrong'd thee!

Selim. Dost thou then
Repent thee of thy crimes?—He does, he does!
He grasps my hand—see the repentant tear
Starts from his eye!—Dost thou indeed repent?
Why then I do forgive thee: from my soul
I feely do forgive thee!—And if crimes,
Abhor'd as thine, dare plead to Heav'n for mercy,—
May Heav'n have mercy on thee.

Bar. Gen'rous Selim!
Too good—I have a daughter—Oh! protect her!
Let not my crimes— [Dies.]

Oth. There fled the guilty soul!

Selim. Haste to the city—stop the rage of slaughter.
Tell my brave people, that Algiers is free;
And tyranny no more. *Exeunt GUARDS.*

Enter ZAPHIRA.

Zaph. What mean these horrors?—wheresoe'er I
turn

My trembling steps, I find some dying wretch,
Welt'ring in gore!—And dost thou live, my Selim?

Selim. Lo, there he lies!

Zaph. O righteous Heav'n!

Selim. Behold thy valiant friends,
Whose faith and courage have o'erwhelm'd the pow'r
Of Barbarossa. Here, once more, thy virtues
Shall dignify the throne, and bless thy people.

Zaph. Just are thy ways, O Heav'n!—Vain ter-
rors, hence!

Once more Zaphira's blest!—My virtuous son,
How shall I e'er repay thy boundless love!

Thus let me snatch thee to my longing arms,
And on thy bosom weep my griefs away!

Selim. O happy hour!—happy, beyond
E'en hope!—Look down, blest shade,
From the bright realms of bliss!—Behold thy queen
Unspotted, uneduc'd, unmov'd in virtue.
Behold the tyrant prostrate at my feet!

And to the mem'ry of thy bleeding wrongs,
Accept this sacrifice.

Zaph. My generous Selim!

Selim. Where is Irene?

Sadi. With looks of wildness, and distracted mien,
She sought her father where the tumult rag'd;
She pass'd me, while the coward Aladin
Fled from my sword: and as I cleft him down,
She fainted at the sight.

Oth. But soon recover'd;
Zamor, our trusty friend, at my command,
Convey'd the weeping fair one to her chamber.

Selim. Thanks to thy generous care:—Come, let
us seek
Th' afflicted maid.

Zaph. Her virtues might atone
For all her father's guilt!—Thy throne be her's:
She merits all thy love.

Selim. Then haste, and find her.—O'er her father's
crimes
Pity shall draw her veil; nay, half absolve them,
When she beholds the virtues of his child!
Now let us thank th' eternal Pow'r: convinc'd,
That Heav'n but tries our virtue by affliction:
That oft the cloud, which wraps the present hour,
Serves but to brighten all our future days!

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

THE END.

WAY TO KEEP HIM



SIR B. FASHION.— RAPTURES AND PARADISE POET
ON THY LIP, AND TO THY HEART BE PRESSED
ACT. V.

SCENE. I.

DRAWN BY C. HEATH

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1807

THE
WAY TO KEEP HIM;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

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REMARKS.

Churchill, in his admirable poem, "The Rosciad," has said of the author of "The Way to Keep Him"—

"And prudent dulness mark'd him for a mayor."

How little Murphy was deserving of the imputation of dulness, this comedy can testify.—It is nevertheless inferior to his "All in the Wrong:" for there, events are more naturally produced, and no one character proceeds to the very confines of extravagance, like Sir Bashful Constant.

Mr. Murphy wrote "The Way to Keep Him" originally in three acts; then wishing to increase the number to five, he introduced this character of Sir Bashful.—He added to the length of his play, but diminished its probability. Much genius is however to be discerned in the conception of this part, and is, in some scenes, displayed with the happiest effect. In others, the husband's whimsical timidity proceeds so far, that it appears more like want of understanding than want of manly boldness; and when once a deficiency of intellects is discovered instead of a silly bias in them, all interest is gone for the person concerned.

It is impossible to attend to characters destitute of sense; and delightful to observe particular follies, usurping the reason of those, who, in all other respects, are wise. Fools who accidentally have sapience, are too despicable to be heeded;—but the wise man, who is accidentally a fool, is an instructive picture of human nature, and worthy the most profound meditation.

Most of the remaining characters belong to this valuable class—Lovemore and his wife are both depicted from nature, and their conduct to each other has an excellent tendency to reform the evils, and avert the ills, of the marriage state.

The Widow Bellmour is another well drawn personage. She talks perfect wisdom, and all she says is perfectly with good intent;—but it may be apprehended that her precepts have had too much force with some wives of fashion, whose good humour at home, and indifference to their husbands' incontinence, may have betrayed them into a carelessness about their own.

Mrs. Abington and Miss Farren (the present Countess of Derby) were both, at the two different houses, and at the self same time, much admired in the Widow Bellmour. Mrs. Abington's performance was the best,—yet not so much superior to Miss Farren's, as Miss Farren was superior to Mrs. Abington in youth and personal charms.

Murphy has given a fulsome dedication of this play to the latter actress, more disgraceful to him than Churchill's satire,—and not more true.

The biographical part of that satirical poem, which applies to the author of this comedy, is mere fact. He *was* educated at St. Omer's, and though designed for a priest, he once attempted the profession of a player. He appeared on the stage in the part of Othello; but a strong voice being wanted to assist his strong judgment, and grace of person to embellish its symmetry, he changed this pursuit to the study of the law, and became a member of the Society of Lincoln's Inn. Still, he attached himself to his beloved theatre by the ties of an author; and passed his happiest hours with Garrick, Foote, Dr. Johnson, and other men of wit and imagination.

It had perhaps been happy for Murphy, had the reproach of dulness, which Churchill has cast upon him, been just; for could it have conferred upon him the mayoralty of the city of London, no doubt it would have been a fortunate exchange for that poetic genius which he possessed; and which could not have secured to him in old age a mere existence, but for its claims upon the taste and pity of his Sovereign.

Murphy died in the summer of 1805, a pensioner on the king's private purse: as related in the Remarks on his comedy of "All in the Wrong."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	DRURY LANE.	COVENT GARDEN.
LOVEMORE	<i>Mr. Wroughton.</i>	<i>Mr. Murray.</i>
SIR BRILLIANT } FASHION }	<i>Mr. Russel.</i>	<i>Mr. Betterton.</i>
SIR BASHFUL } CONSTANT }	<i>Mr. Bannister.</i>	<i>Mr. Quick.</i>
WILLIAM	<i>Mr. De Camp.</i>	<i>Mr. Clarke.</i>
SIDEBOARD	<i>Mr. Purser.</i>	<i>Mr. Farley.</i>
THE WIDOW } BELLMOUR }	<i>Mrs. Jordan.</i>	<i>Mrs. Abington.</i>
MRS. LOVEMORE	<i>Mrs. H. Johnston.</i>	<i>Mrs. Coates.</i>
LADY CONSTANT	<i>Miss Mellon.</i>	<i>Miss Chapman.</i>
MUSLIN	<i>Miss Pope.</i>	<i>Mrs. Mattocks.</i>
MIGNIONET	<i>Miss Tidswell.</i>	
FURNISH	<i>Mrs. Coates.</i>	

SCENE—London.

THE
WAY TO KEEP HIM.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

A Room in LOVEMORE'S House.

WILLIAM *at Cards with a Brother Servant.*

Will. A plague on it!—I've turn'd out my game.
—Is forty-seven good?

Serv. Equal.——

Will. A plague go with it—tearse to a queen——

Serv. Equal.

Will. I've ruin'd my game, and be hang'd to me.
I don't believe there's a footman in England plays
with worse luck than myself.—Four aces is four-
teen!

Serv. That's hard :—cruel, by Jupiter!

Will. Four aces is fourteen—fifteen. [Plays.

Serv. There's your equality.

Will. Very well——sixteen—[Plays.] seventeen—
[Plays.

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. There's a couple of you, indeed!—You're so fond of the vices of your betters, that you're scarce out of your beds, when you must pretend to imitate them and their ways, forsooth.

Will. Pr'ythee, be quiet, woman, do—Eighteen—
[*Plays.*

Mus. Set you up, indeed, Mr. Coxcomb—

Will. Nineteen!—Clubs—
[*Plays.*

Mus. Have done with your foolery, will ye? and send my lady word—

Will. Hold your tongue, Mrs. Muslin, you'll put us out.—What shall I play?—I'll tell you, woman, my master and I desire to have nothing to say to you or your lady.—Twenty—Diamonds! [*Plays.*

Mus. But I tell you, Mr. Saucebox, that my lady desires to know when your master came home last night, and how he is this morning?

Will. Pr'ythee, be quiet: I and my master are resolved to be teas'd no more by you. And so, Mrs. Go-between, you may return as you came.—What the devil shall I play?—We'll have nothing to do with you, I tell you—

Mus. You'll have nothing to do with us!—But you shall have to do with us, or I'll know the reason why.
[*Snatches the Cards out of his Hands.*

Will. Death and fury! This meddling woman has destroyed my whole game.

Mus. Now, sir, will you be so obliging as to send an answer to her questions—How and when your rake-helly master came home last night?

Will. I'll tell you what, Mrs. Muslin,—you and my master, will be the death of me at last; that's what you will.—In the name of charity, what do you both take me for? Whatever appearances may be, I am but of mortal mould: Nothing supernatural about me.

Mus. Upon my word, Mr. Powderpuff!—

Will. I have not indeed—And so, do you see, flesh and blood can't hold it always—I can't be for ever a slave to your whims, and your second-hand airs.

Mus. Second-hand airs!—

Will. Yes, second-hand airs!—You take them at your ladies' toilets with their cast gowns, and so you descend to us with them.—And then, on the other hand, there's my master!—Because he chuses to live upon the principal of his health, and so run out his whole stock as fast as he can, he must have the pleasure of my company with him in his devil's dance to the other world.—Never at home till three, four, five, six, in the morning!

Mus. Ay, a vile, ungrateful man! to have so little regard for a wife that doats upon him.—And your love for me, is all of a piece. I've no patience with you both.—A couple of false, perfidious, abandoned, profligate——

Will. Hey, hey! where's your tongue running?—My master is, as the world goes, a good sort of a civil kind of a husband, and I,—Heaven help me,—a poor simpleton of an amorous, constant puppy, that bears with all the follies of his little tyrant here.—Come and kiss me, you jade, come and kiss me.

Mus. Paws off, Cæsar——Don't think to make me your dupe. I know, when you go with him to this new lady, this Bath acquaintance—and I know, you're as false as my master, and give all my dues to your Mrs. Mignonet there.——

Will. Hush,—not a word of that.—I'm ruined, pressed, and sent on board a tender directly, if you blab that I trusted you with that secret.—But to charge me with falsehood, injustice, and ingratitude! My master, to be sure, does drink an agreeable dish of tea with the Widow.—Has been there every night

this month past.—How long it will last, Heaven knows! But thither he goes, and I attend him.—I ask my master,—Sir, says I, what time would you please to want me?—He gives me his answer, and then I strut by Mrs. Mignonet, without so much as tipping her one glance; she stands watering at the mouth, and “A pretty fellow, that,” says she.—“Ay, ay, gaze on,” says I, “gaze on;—I see what you would be at:—you’d be glad to have me,——you’d be glad to have me!—But, sour grapes, my dear! I’ll go home and cherish my own lovely wanton.”—And so I do, you know I do.—Then, after toying with thee, I hasten back to my master—later, indeed, than he desires, but always too soon for him. He’s loath to part; he lingers and dangles, and I stand cooling my heels.—O, to the devil I pitch such a life!—

Mus. Why don’t you strive to reclaim the vile man then?

Will. Softly, not so fast; I have my talent to be sure! yes, yes, I have my talent; some influence over my master’s mind:—But can you suppose that I have power to turn the drift of his inclinations, and lead him as I please—and to whom?—to his wife! Pshaw! ridiculous, foolish, and absurd!

Mus. Mightily well, sir! can you proceed?

Will. I tell you, a wife is out of date now-a-days; time was—but that’s all over—a wife’s a drug now; mere tar-water, with every virtue under Heaven, but no body takes it.

Mus. Well, I swear I could slap your impudent face.

Will. Come and kiss me, I say—

Mus. A fiddlestick for your kisses!—while you encourage your master to open rebellion against the best of wives,——

Will. I tell you, it’s her own fault; why don’t she

strive to please him, as you do me?—Come, throw your arms about my neck——

Mus. Ay, as I used to do, Mr. Brazen!—Hush! My lady's bell rings.—How long has he been up?—When did he come home?

Will. At five this morning; rubbed his forehead, damn'd himself for a blockhead, went to bed in a peevish humour, and is now in tiptop spirits with Sir Brilliant Fashion, in the next room. [*Bell rings.*

Mus. O lud! that bell rings again—There, there, let me be gone. [*She kisses him, and exit.*

Will. There goes high and low life contrasted in one person: 'tis well I have not told her the whole of my master's secrets: she'll blab that he visits this Widow from Bath. But if they inquire, they'll be told he does not—The plot lies deeper than they are aware of, and so they will only get into a puzzle—hush!—yonder comes my master and Sir Brilliant—Let me go out of the way.—Here, Tom, help me to take away the things. [*Excunt.*

Enter LOVEMORE and SIR BRILLIANT FASHION.

Love. Ha! ha!—my dear Sir Brilliant—I must both pity and laugh at you—I'll swear thou art metamorphosed into the most whimsical being!—

Sir Bril. Nay, pr'ythee, Lovemore, truce with your raillery—it is for sober advice that I apply to you——

Love. Sober advice!—ha! ha!—Thou art very far gone indeed.—Sober advice! There is no such thing as talking seriously and soberly to the tribe of lovers—That eternal absence of mind that possesses ye all—There is no society with you—I was damnable company myself, when I was one of the pining herd; but a dose of matrimony has brought me back again to myself; has cooled me pretty handsomely, I assure you;—Ay! and here comes *repetatur Haustus*.

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. My lady sends her compliments, and desires to know how you are this morning?

Love. O lord! my head aches woefully—it's the devil to be teased in this manner—What did you say, child?

Mus. My lady sent to know how you do, sir—

Love. O right!—your lady——give her my compliments, and I am very well: tell her——

Mus. She begs you won't think of going out without seeing her.

Love. There again, now!—tell her—tell her what you will—I shall be glad to see her—I'll wait on her—any thing—what you will.

Mus. I shall let my lady know, sir. *[Exit.*

Love. My dear Sir Brilliant, you see I am an example before your eyes——Put the Widow Bellmour entirely out of your head, and let my Lord Etheridge——

Sir Bril. Positively no!—My pride is piqued, and if I can, my Lord Etheridge shall find me a more formidable rival than he is aware of.

Enter WILLIAM.

Will. Sir Bashful Constant is in his chariot at the upper end of the street, and has sent his servant to know if your honour is at home.

Love. By all means——I shall be glad to see Sir Bashful. *[Exit WILLIAM.]* Now here comes another mortifying instance to deter you from all thoughts of marriage.

Sir Bril. Pshaw! hang him; he is no instance for me—a younger brother, who has lived in middling life; comes to an estate and a title on the death of a consumptive baronet, marries a woman of quality, and carries the primitive ideas of his narrow educa-

tion into high life—Hang him!—he is no example for me.

Love. But he is a good deal improved since that time.

Sir Bril. Po! a mere Hottentot; unacquainted with life,—blushes every moment, and looks suspicious, as if he imagined you have some design upon him.

Love. Why, I fancy, I can explain that—I have found out a part of his character lately.—You must know, there is nothing he dreads so much as being an object of ridicule: and so, let the customs and fashions of the world be ever so absurd, he complies, lest he should be laughed at for being particular.

Sir Bril. And so, through the fear of being ridiculous, he becomes substantially so every moment.

Love. Just so.—And then, to see him shrink back as it were, from your observation, casting a jealous and fearful eye all around him [Mimics him.

Sir Bril. Ha! ha!—that's his way—but there is something worse in him——his behaviour to his lady—Ever quarrelling, and insulting her with nonsense about the dignity of a husband, and his superior reason.

Love. Why, there again now; his fear of being ridiculous, may be at the bottom of that.—I don't think he hates my Lady Constant—She is a fine woman, and knows the world.—There is something mysterious in that part of his conduct.

Sir Bril. Mysterious! not to you—he is ever consulting you—you are in all his secrets.

Love. Yes, but I never can find any of them out! And yet there is something working within, that he would fain tell me, and yet he is shy, and he hints, and he hesitates, and then he returns again into himself, and ends just where he began.—Hark! I hear his chariot at the door.

Sir Bril. Why do you let him come after you?—he is a sad troublesome fellow, Lovemore.

Love. Nay, you are too severe——Come, he has fits of goodnature.

Sir Bril. His wife has fits of goodnature, you mean—How goes on your design there?

Love. Po, po! I have no design, but I take it, you are a formidable man in that quarter.

Sir Bril. Who, I? Pshaw! no such thing.

Love. Never deny it to me;—I know you have made advances.

Sir Bril. Why, faith, I pity my Lady Constant, and cannot bear to see her treated as she is.

Love. Well, that's generous—have a care; I hear him—Sir Brilliant, I admire your amorous charity of all things—ha! ha!—Hush! here he comes.

Enter SIR BASHFUL.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, a good morning to you——Sir Brilliant, your servant, Sir.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, I am heartily glad to see you—I hope you left my lady well.

Sir Bash. I can't say, sir; I am not her physician.

Sir Bril. What a brute!—Well, Lovemore, I must be gone.

Love. Why in such a hurry?

Sir Bril. I must—I promised to call on a lady over the way—A relation of mine from Wiltshire—I shan't stay long.

Love. Very well—a l'honneur.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, your servant—Mr. Lovemore, yours. [Exit.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I am glad he is gone; for I have something to advise with you about.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. I have had another brush with my wife!

Love. I am sorry for it, Sir Bashful—I am perfectly glad of it. [Aside.

Sir Bash. Ay! and pretty warm the quarrel was.—“Sir Bashful,” says she, “I wonder you will disgrace yourself at this rate—you know my pin money is not sufficient.—My mercer has been with me again—I can’t bear to be dunn’d at this rate:” and then she added something about her quality—you know, Mr. Lovemore, [Smiling.] she is a woman of quality.

Love. Yes, and a fine woman too!

Sir Bash. No—no—no—do you think she is a fine woman?

Love. Most certainly—a very fine woman!

Sir Bash. [Smiling.] Why, yes—I think she is what you may call a fine woman.—She keeps good company, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. The very best.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; that she does; your tiptop; none else;—but one would not encourage her too much, for all that, Mr. Lovemore—The world would think me but a weak man if I did.

Love. The world will talk, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. So it will;—and so I answered her stoutly. “Madam,” says I, “a fig for your quality—don’t quality me—I’ll act like a man of sense, madam, and I’ll be master in my own house, madam;—I have made a provision for the issue of our marriage in the settlement, madam; and I would have you to know, that I am not obliged to pay for your cats and your dogs, and your squirrels, and your monkeys, and your gaming debts.”

Love. How could you? That was too sharply said—

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, I gave it her—but for all that [Smiling.] I—I—I am—very good-natured at the bottom, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I dare say you are, Sir Bashful—

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; but a man must keep up his

own dignity—I'll tell you what I did—I went to the mercer's myself, and paid him the money.

[Smiles at him.]

Love. Did you?

Sir Bash. I did: but then one would not let the world know that—No, no.

Love. By no means.

Sir Bash. It would make them think me too uxorious.

Love. So it would!—I must encourage that notion of his. [Aside.]

Sir Bash. And so I told him; “Mr. Lutestring, says I, “mum’s the word—there is your money; but let nobody know that I paid you slily.”

Love. Well, you have the handsomest way of doing a genteel thing——

Sir Bash. But that is not all I have to tell you.

Love. No!

Sir Bash. No—no— [Smiles.] I have a deeper secret than that.

Love. Have ye?

Sir Bash. I have;—may I trust you?

Love. O! upon my honour——

Sir Bash. Well, well! I know you are my friend—I know you are, and I have great confidence in you. Lookye, Mr. Lovemore, you must know——

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. Sir, my lady desires to know, if you will drink a dish of tea with her this morning?

Love. I desire I may not be teased in this manner—tell your mistress—go—go about your business——

[Turns her out.]

Sir Bash. [Aside.] Ay! I see he don’t care a cherry-stone for his wife.

Love. I hate this interruption—Well, Sir Bash—ful—

Sir Bash. No; he does not care a pinch of snuff for her. [*Aside.*

Love. Well—Proceed, Sir Bashful—

Sir Bash. It does not signify, Mr. Lovemore; it's a foolish affair; I won't trouble you about it—

Love. Nay, that's unkind—

Sir Bash. Well, well! come, I will—Do you think Muslin did not overhear us?

Love. Not a syllable—Come, come, we are safe—

Sir Bash. Let me ask you a question first—Pray now, have you any regard for your lady?

Love. The highest value for her.

Sir Bash. I repose it with you.—You must know, Mr. Lovemore—as I told you—I am at the bottom very goodnature'd; and though appearances may in some sort—[*SIR BRILLIANT rings without.*] We are interrupted again.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Well, I have paid my visit, Lovemore.

Love. This is the most cross accident—So Sir Brilliant!

Sir Bash. Ah! I see there is no going on now—Mr. Lovemore, I wish you a good day.

Love. Po! Pr'ythee—you shan't go.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; another time—Suppose you call at my house at one o'clock—nobody shall interrupt us there. [*Aside to LOVEMORE.*

Love. With all my heart.

Sir Bash. Do so, then; do so—we'll be snug by ourselves—Well, Mr. Lovemore, your servant, a good morning—Sir Brilliant, I kiss your hand.—You won't forget, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Depend upon me.

Sir Bash. Very well.—He is the only friend I have. [*Exit.*

Love. Ha! ha!—you broke in upon us in the

most critical moment—He was just going to communicate——

Sir Bril. I beg your pardon ; I did not know—

Love. Nay, it's no matter ; I shall get it out of him another time.

Enter MUSLIN.

Mus. My lady, sir, is quite impatient.

Love. Pshaw ! for ever teasing !—I'll wait upon her presently. [Exit MUSLIN.

Sir Bril. I'll step and entertain her while you dress—May I take that liberty, Lovemore ?

Love. You know you may—no ceremony—how could you ask such a question ?—apropos ; But, Sir Brilliant, first step one moment into my study—I want just one word with you.

Sir Bril. I attend you.

Love. This absurd Sir Bashful ! ha ! ha ! a ridiculous, unaccountable——ha ! ha ! [Exit.

SCENE II.

Another Apartment.

MRS. LOVEMORE, and a MAID attending her.

Mrs. Love. This trash of tea !—I don't know why I drink so much of it.—Heigho !—I wonder what keeps Muslin—Do you step, child, and see if she is come back.

Maid. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Surely, never was any poor woman treated with such cruel indifference ; nay, with such an open, undisguised insolence of gallantry.

Enter MUSLIN.

Mrs. Love. Well, Muslin, have you seen his prime minister?

Mus. Yes, ma'am, I have seen Mr. William; and he says, as how my master came home according to custom, at five this morning, and in a huge pickle.—He is now in his study, and has Sir Brilliant Fashion with him.

Mrs. Love. Is he there again?

Mus. He is, ma'am; and as I came by the door, I heard them both laughing as loud as any thing.

Mrs. Love. About some precious mischief, I'll be sworn; and all at my cost too!—Heigho!

Mus. Dear ma'am, why will you chagrine yourself about a vile man, that is not worth—no, as I live and breathe,—not worth a single sigh!

Mrs. Love. What can I do, Muslin?

Mus. Do, ma'am! Lard!—If I was as you, I'd do for him;—As I am a living christian, I would.—If I could not cure my grief, I'd find some comforts, that's what I would.

Mrs. Love. Heigho!—I have no comfort.

Mus. No comfort, ma'am?—Whose fault then?—Would any body but you, ma'am——It provokes me to think of it.—Would any body, ma'am, young and handsome as you are, with so many accomplishments, ma'am, sit at home here, as melancholy as a poor servant out of place?—And all this, for what?—Why, for a husband! and such a husband!—What do you think the world will say of you, ma'am, if you go on this way?

Mrs. Love. I care not what they say—I am tired of the world, and the world may be tired of me, if it will:—My troubles are my own only, and I must endeavour to bear them.—Who knows what patience may do?—If Mr. Lovemore has any feeling left, my

resignation may some day or other have its effect, and incline him to do me justice.

Mus. But, dear ma'am, that's waiting for dead men's shoes,—incline him to do you justice!—What signifies expecting and expecting? Give me a bird in the hand.—Lard, ma'am, to be for ever pining and grieving!—Dear heart! If all the women in London, in your case, were to sit down and die of the spleen, what would become of all the public places?—They might turn Vauxhall to a hopgarden, make a brew-house of Ranelagh, and let both the playhouses to a methodist preacher. We should not have the racketting with them we have now—"John, let the horses be put to—John, go to my Lady Trumpabout's, and invite her to a small party of twenty or thirty card-tables.—John, run to my Lady Catgut, and let her ladyship know I'll wait on her to the new opera.—John, run as fast as ever you can, with my compliments to Mr. Brandon, and tell him, I shall take it as the greatest favour on earth, if he will let me have a side-box for the new play. No excuse, tell him." They whisk about the town, and rantipole it with as unconcerned looks, and as florid outsides, as if they were treated at home like so many goddesses, though every body knows possession has ungoddessed them all long ago; and their husbands care no more for them,—no, by jingo, no more than they do for their husbands.

Mrs. Love. You run on at a strange rate.

Mus. [*In a Passion.*] Dear ma'am, 'tis enough to make a body run on—If every body thought like you——

Mrs. Love. If every body lov'd like me.

Mus. A brass thimble for love, if it is not answered by love.—What the deuce is here to do?—Shall I go and fix my heart upon a man, that shall despise me for that very reason;—and, "Aye," says he, "poor fool, I see she loves me,—the woman's well enough

only she has one inconvenient circumstance about her: I'm married to her, and marriage is the devil."——And then, when he's going a roguing, smiles impudently in your face, and, "My dear, divert yourself, I'm just going to kill half an hour at the chocolate-house, or to peep in at the play:—your servant, my dear, your servant."—Fye upon 'em!—I know 'em all.—Give me a husband that will enlarge the circle of my innocent pleasures:——but a husband now-a-days, ma'am, is no such a thing.—A husband now—as I hope for mercy, is nothing at all but a scare-screw; to show you the fruit, but touch it if you dare.—A husband!—the devil take 'em all!—Lord forgive me for swearing—is nothing but a bugbear, a snap-dragon; a husband, ma'am, is——

Mrs. Love. Pr'ythee, peace with your tongue, and see what keeps that girl.

Mrs. Yes, ma'am—Why, Jenny! why don't you come up to my lady? What do you stand a gossiping there for?——A husband, ma'am, is a mere monster;—that is to say, if one makes him so; then for certain he is a monster indeed;—and if one does not make him so, then he behaves like a monster; and of the two evils, by my troth——Ma'am, was you ever at the play of Catharine and Mercutio?—The vile man calls his wife his goods, and his chattels, and his household stuff.—There you may see, ma'am, what a husband is,—a husband is——But here comes one will tell you—Here comes Sir Brilliant Fashion.—Ask his advice, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. His advice! Ask advice of the man who has estranged Mr. Lovemore's affections from me!

Mus. Well, I protest and vow, ma'am, I think Sir Brilliant a very pretty gentleman.—He's the very pink of the fashion!—he dresses fashionably, lives fashionably, wins your money fashionably, loses his own

fashionably, and does every thing fashionably: and then, he is so lively, and talks so lively, and so much to say, and so never at a loss——But here he comes,

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, singing.

Sir Bril. Mrs. Lovemore, your most obedient very humble servant.——But, my dear madam, what, always in a vis-a-vis party with your *Suivante*?——You will afford me your pardon, my dear ma'am, if I avow that this does a little wear the appearance of misanthropy.

Mrs. Love. Far from it, Sir Brilliant——We were engaged in your panegyric.

Sir Bril. My panegyric!——Then I am come most apropos to give a helping hand towards making it complete.——Mr. Lovemore will kiss your hand presently, ma'am, he has not as yet entirely adjusted his dress——In the mean time, I can, if you please, help you to some anecdotes, which will perhaps enable you to colour your canvass a little higher.

Mrs. Love. I hope you will be sure, among those anecdotes,——You may go, Muslin,——not to omit the egregious exploit of seducing Mr. Lovemore entirely from his wife.

[She makes a Sign to MUSLIN to go.—Exit MUSLIN,

Sir Bril. I, ma'am!——Let me perish, ma'am——

Mrs. Love. O, sir, I am no stranger to——

Sir Bril. May fortune eternally forsake me, and beauty frown on me, if ever——

Mrs. Love. Don't protest too strongly, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. May I never hold four by honours——

Mrs. Love. O, sir, it is in vain to deny——

Sir Bril. Nay, but my dear Mrs. Lovemore, give me leave.——I alienate the affections of Mr. Lovemore!

—Consider, madam, how would this tell in Westminster Hall?—Sir Brilliant Fashion, how say you? guilty of this indictment, or not guilty?—Not guilty, poz.—Thus issue is joined;—you enter the court, and in sober sadness charge the whole plump upon me, without a word as to the how, when, and where;—No proof positive,—there ends the prosecution.

Mrs. Love. But, sir, your stating of the case—

Sir Bril. Dear ma'am, don't interrupt—

Mrs. Love. Let me explain this matter—

Sir Bril. Nay, Mrs. Lovemore, allow me fair play—I am now upon my defence.—You will please to consider, gentlemen of the jury, that Mr. Lovemore is not a ward, nor I a guardian; that he is his own master to do as he pleases; that Mr. Lovemore is fond of gaiety, pleasure, and enjoyment; that he knows how to live; to make use of the senses nature has given him, and pluck the fruit that grows around him.—This is the whole affair.—How say ye, gentlemen of the jury?—Not guilty.—There, ma'am, you see, Not guilty.

Mrs. Love. You run on finely, Sir Brilliant;—but don't imagine that this bantering way—

Sir Bril. Acquitted by my country, ma'am, you see,—fairly acquitted!

Mrs. Love. After the very edifying counsel you give Mr. Lovemore, this loose strain of yours, Sir Brilliant, is not at all surprising; and, sir, your late project—

Sir Bril. My late project!

Mrs. Love. Yes, sir: Not content with leading Mr. Lovemore into a thousand dissipations from all conjugal affection and domestic happiness, you have lately introduced him to your Mrs. Bellmour,—

Sir Bril. Ma'am, he does not so much as know Mrs. Bellmour.

Mrs. Love. Fie upon it, Sir Brilliant!—falsehood is but a poor—

Sir Bril. Falsehood I disdain, ma'am,—and I, Sir Brilliant Fashion, declare, that Mr. Lovemore, your husband, is not acquainted with the Widow Bellmour. You don't know that lady, ma'am; but I'll let you into her whole history—her whole history, ma'am:—Pray be seated—*[Brings Chairs down.]* The Widow Bellmour is a lady of so agreeable a vivacity, that it is no wonder all the pretty fellows are on their knees to her.—Her manner so entertaining, such quickness of transition from one thing to another; and every thing she does, does so become her:—and then she has such a feeling heart, and such generosity of sentiment!—

Mrs. Love. Mighty well, sir!—She is a very vestal—and a vestal from your school of painting must be very curious—But give me leave, sir—How comes it that you desist from paying your addresses in that quarter?

Sir Bril. Why, faith, I find that my Lord George Etheridge,—who I thought was out of the kingdom,—is the happy man: and so all that remains for me, is to do justice to the lady, and console myself in the best manner I can, for the insufficiency of my pretensions.

Mrs. Love. And may I rely on this?

Sir Bril. May the first woman I put the question to strike me to the centre with a supercilious eyebrow, if every syllable is not minutely true;—so that you see, ma'am, I am not the cause of your inquietude. There is not on earth a man that could be more averse from such a thing; nor a person in the world, who more earnestly aspires to prove the tender esteem he bears ye.—*[She rises disconcerted.]* You see, my dear ma'am, we both have cause of discontent; we are both disappointed,—both crossed in love—and

so, ma'am, the least we can do, is, both heartily join to——

Lovemore. [*Speaks within.*] William! is the chariot at the door?

Sir Bril. We are interrupted—There's my friend.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Love. Very well—let the chariot be brought round directly.—How do you do this morning, my dear? Sir Brilliant, I beg your pardon—How do you do, my dear? [*With an Air of cold Civility.*]

Mrs. Love. Only a little indisposed in mind, and indisposition of the mind is of no sort of consequence—not worth a cure.

Love. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore—Indisposition of the mind——Sir Brilliant, that is really a mighty pretty ring you have on your finger.

Sir Bril. A bauble:—Will you look at it?

Mrs. Love. Though I have but few obligations to Sir Brilliant, yet I fancy I may ascribe to him the favour of this visit, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. [*Looking at the Ring.*] Nay, now positively you wrong me;—I was obliged to you for your civil inquiries concerning me this morning; and so, on my part, I came to return the compliment before I go abroad.—Upon my word, 'tis very prettily set.

[*Gives it.*]

Mrs. Love. Are you going abroad, sir?

Love. A matter of business,—I hate business—but business must be done. [*Examining his Ruffles.*] Pray is there any news?—any news, my dear?

Mrs. Love. It would be news to me, sir, if you would be kind enough to let me know whether I may expect the favour of your company to dinner?

Love. It would be impertinent in me to answer such a question, because I can give no direct positive answer to it;—as things happen—perhaps I may—per-

haps may not.—But don't let me be of any inconvenience to you ;—it is not material where a body eats.—Apropos—you have heard what happened ?

[To SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. When and where ?

Love. A word in your ear—Ma'am, with your permission—

Mrs. Love. That cold, contemptuous civility, Mr. Lovemore—

Love. Pshaw ! pr'ythee, now—How can you, my dear ?—That's very peevish now, and illnatured. It is but about a mere trifle——Harkye, [*Whispers.*] I lost every thing I play'd for, after you went,—The foreigner and he understand one another.—I beg pardon, ma'am, it was only about an affair at the opera.

Mrs. Love. The opera, Mr. Lovemore, or any thing, is more agreeable than my company.

Love. You wrong me now ; I declare, you wrong me ;—and if it will give you any pleasure, I'll sup at home.—Can't we meet at the St. Alban's to-night ?

[*Aside to SIR BRILLIANT.*

Mrs. Love. I believe, I need not tell you what pleasure that would give me : But unless the pleasure is mutual, Mr. Lovemore——

Love. Ma'am, I—I—I perceive all the delicacy of that sentiment ;—But—a—I shall incommode you ;—you possibly may have some private party—and it would be very unpolite in me, to obstruct your schemes of pleasure.—Would it not, Sir Brilliant ?

[*Laughs.*

Sir Bril. It would be gothic to the last degree. Ha ! ha !

Love. Ha ! ha !—To be sure ; for me to be of the party, would look as if we lived together like our friend Sir Bashful Constant and his lady, who are for ever like two game cocks, ready armed to goad and wound one another most heartily—Ha ! ha !

Sir Bril. The very thing—Ha! ha!

Love. So it is—so it is! [*Both stand laughing.*]

Mrs. Love. Very well, gentlemen! you have it all to yourselves.

Love. Odso!—[*Looking at his Watch.*] I shall be beyond my time.—Any commands into the city, madam?

Mrs. Love. Commands!—I have no commands, sir.

Love. I have an appointment there at my Banker's, —Sir Brilliant, you know old Discount?

Sir Bril. What, he that was in parliament?

Love. The same.—Entire Butt, I think, was the name of the borough.—Ha! ha! ha!—Can I set you down any where, Sir Brilliant?

Sir Bril. Can you give me a cast in St. James's Street?

Love. By all means—*Allons*—Mrs. Lovemore, your most obedient, ma'am.—Who waits there?—Mrs. Lovemore, no ceremony—your servant.

[*Exit, singing.*]

Sir Bril. Ma'am, you see I don't carry Mr. Lovemore abroad now—I have the honour, ma'am, to take my leave—I shall have her, I see plainly;—Sir Brilliant, mind your hits, and your business is done. [*Aside.*] Ma'am, your most obedient. [*Exit.*]

Enter MUSLIN, hastily.

Mus. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. Love. To be insulted thus by his loose confident carriage!—

Mus. As I live and breathe, ma'am, if I was as you, I would not flutter myself about it.

Mrs. Love. About what?

Mus. La! what signifies mincing matters!—I overheard it all.

Mrs. Love. You did!—did you? [*Angrily.*]

Mus. Ma'am!

Mrs. Love. It does not signify at present.

Mus. No, ma'am, it does not signify, and revenge is sweet, I think; and, by my troth! I don't see why you should stand on ceremony with a husband that stands upon none with you.

Mrs. Love. Again!—Pr'ythee, Mrs. Malapert, none of your advice.—How dare you talk in this manner to me?—Let me hear no more of this impertinent freedom. [*Walks about.*]

Mus. No, ma'am.—It's very well, ma'am.—I have done, ma'am.—[*Disconcerted, and then she speaks aside.*—What the devil is here to do?—An unmannerly thing, to go for to huff me in this manner!—

Mrs. Love. [*Still walking about.*] To make his character public, and render him the subject of every tea-table throughout this town, would only serve to widen the breach, and, instead of his neglect, might call forth his anger, and settle at last into a fixed aversion.—Lawyers, parting, and separate maintenance, would ensue.—No,—I must avoid that,—if possible, I will avoid that.—What must be done?

Mus. What can she be thinking of now?—The sulky thing, not to be more familiar with such a friend as I am!—What can she mean?—Did you speak to me, ma'am?

Mrs. Love. Suppose I were to try that!—Muslin.

Mus. Ma'am!—Now for it——

Mrs. Love. You heard Sir Brilliant deny that Mr. Lovemore visits at this Widow Bellmour's.

Mus. Lard, ma'am, he is as full of fibs as a French milliner,—he does visit there,—I know it all from William,—I'll be hang'd in my own garters, if he does not.

Mrs. Love. I know not what to do!—Heigho!—Let my chair be got ready instantly.

Mus. Your chair, ma'am!—Are you going out, ma'am?

Mrs. Love. Don't tease me with your talk, but do as I bid you,—and bring my cloak down to the parlour immediately.—Heigho! [*Exit.*

Mus. What is in the wind now?—An ill-natured puss, not to tell me what she is about.—It's no matter,—she does not know what she is about—Before I'd lead such a life as she does, I'd take a lover's leap into Rosamond's pond.—I love to see company, for my part, and not to be mop'd to death here with her humdrum ways—tease, tease, tease—"Heigho! Muslin, go to William—where's his master?—when did he come home?—how long has he been up?—how does he do?" with the same thing over and over again, to the end of the chapter.—A fine life indeed, for a person that has such fine spirits as I have by nature; it's enough to ruin my constitution. I love to see company, for my part—Bless me! I had like to have forgot, there's that Mrs. Marmalet comes to my rout to-night.—I had as lieve she had stay'd away—She's nothing but mere lumber—So formal—She won't play above shilling whist: who the devil does she think is to make a shilling party for her? No such thing to be done now-a-days—Nobody plays shilling whist now, unless I was to send for the tradespeople—but I sha'n't let myself down at that rate for Madam Marmalet, I promise you. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT'S.

Enter SIR BASHFUL.

[*Knock.*]

Sir Bash. Did not I hear a knock at the door?—
Yes, yes, I did—The coach is just driving away—Ay,
ay! I am right enough—Sideboard! Sideboard!—
come hither, Sideboard!—I must know who it is—
My wife keeps the best company in England—but I
must be cautious—Servants love to peep into the
bottom of their master's secrets.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Whose coach was that at the door just now?

Side. The Duchess of Hurricane's, please your
honour.

Sir Bash. The Duchess of Hurricane's!—A wo-
man of great rank—The Duchess of Hurricane,
Sideboard! What did she want?

Side. I can't say, your honour—She left this
card.

Sir Bash. A card!—Let me see it.— [Reads.]

*The Duchess of Hurricane's compliments to Lady
Constant; she has left the rooks, and the country squires,*

and the crows, and the fox hunters, and the hounds, to their own dear society for the rest of the winter; and lets her ladyship know, that she sees company, at Hurricane House, on Wednesdays, for the remainder of the season.

Make me thankful! Here's a card from a duchess!

[*Aside.*] What have you in your hand?

Side. Cards that have been left here all this morning, your honour.

Sir Bash. All the morning!—Why, I may as well—May as well keep the Coach and Horses in Piccadilly—I won't bear this, Sideboard, I can't bear it—

[*Aside.*] Ha! ha! ha!—Let me see,—let me see!

Side. There, your honour. [*Gives the Cards.*]

Sir Bash. What! all these this morning, Sideboard?

Side. Yes, please your honour.

Sir Bash. This is too much, Sideboard—it is too much indeed! Ha! ha! ha! [*Aside.*] I can't bear it, Sideboard!—No, no—I cannot bear it.—Ha! ha! ha! [*Aside.*] Make me thankful! All people of tiptop condition to visit my wife. Ha! ha! ha! [*Aside.*

Enter FURNISH.

What's the matter, Furnish?

Fur. Nothing, sir; nothing's the matter.

Sir Bash. What are you about? Where are you going? What have you to do now?

Fur. To do, sir?—Only to tell the chairmen they must go out with the chair this evening, and Black George with a flambeau before them, to pay some visits, that's all.

Sir Bash. What polite ways people of fashion have of being intimate with one another!—An empty chair to return visits for her!—I can't help laughing at it.—Ha! ha! ha!—I like to see her do like other

people. [*Aside.*] But I shall be found out by my servants—I tell you, Sideboard, and I tell you too, Mrs. Impertinence, that my lady leads a life of folly, and noise, and hurry, and cards, and dice, and absurdity, and nonsense; and I won't bear it—I am resolv'd I will not—I think I hear her coming! I do—I do—I will not go on this way! and now, I'll tell her roundly a piece of my mind.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

She looks charmingly to-day! [*Aside.*] So, my Lady Constant—I have had my house full of duns again to-day.

Lady Con. Obliging creatures to call so often!—What did they want?

Sir Bash. What did they want!—They wanted their money.

Lady Con. Well, and you paid them—Did not you?

Sir Bash. I pay them!—'Sdeath, madam! what do you take me for?

Lady Con. I took you for a husband, but I find I was mistaken.

Sir Bash. Death and fire!—I see you're an ungrateful woman—I am sure, my Lady Constant, I have behav'd with great good-nature to you—Did not I go into parliament, madam, to please you?—Did not I go and get drunk at a borough for a month together; ay, and mobbed at the George and Vulture, and pelted and horse-whipp'd the day before election,—and all this, to please you?—Did not I stand up in the House to make a speech merely to gratify your pride?—And did not I expose myself there?—Did I know whether I stood upon my head or my heels?—What the devil had I to do in parliament? What's my country to me?

Lady Con. Who mention'd your country, sir?

Sir Bash. I desire you won't mention it—I have nothing to do with it—No, nor with your debts—I have nothing to do with them; and I desire you will tell your people to come no more after me.—I know how to prevent that—Notice in the Gazette will exempt me from your extravagancies—I did not live in the Temple for nothing!

Fur. I protest, I never heard any body talk so mean in all my days before.

Lady Con. Don't you be so pert, pray.—Leave the room—Go both of you down stairs.

[*Exeunt FURNISH and SIDEBBOARD.*]

Sir Bash. I have kept it up pretty well before my servants. She's a fine woman, and talks admirably!

[*Aside.*]

Lady Con. Is there never to be an end of this usage, Sir Bashful?—Am I to be for ever made unhappy by your humours?

Sir Bash. Humours!—I like that expression prodigiously!—Humours indeed!

Lady Con. You may harp upon the word, sir—Humours you have, sir, and such as are become insupportable.

Sir Bash. She talks like an angel! [*Aside.*] Madam, [*Moderating his Voice.*] I should have no humours, as you call them, if your extravagancies were not insupportable.—What would the world say?—Let us canvass the matter quietly and easily—What would the world think of my understanding, if I was seen to encourage your way of life?

Lady Con. What will they think of it now, sir?—Take this along with you, there is a certain set of people, who, when they would avoid an error, are sure to fall into the opposite extreme.

Sir Bash. There's for you!—That's a translation from Horace—Dum vitant stulti vitia—O, she is a notable woman.

[*Aside.*]

Lady Con. Let me tell you, Sir Bashful, there is not in the world a more ridiculous sight, than a person wrapping up himself in imaginary wisdom—If he can but guard against one giant-vice, while he becomes an easy prey to a thousand other absurdities.

Sir Bash. Lord, I am nothing at all to her in an argument! She has a tongue that can reason me out of my senses—I could almost find in my heart to tell her the whole truth.—[*Aside.*] Lookye, madam, you know I am goodnatur'd at the bottom, and any thing in reason——

Lady Con. When did I desire any thing else?—Is it unreasonable to live with decency?—Is it unreasonable to keep the company I have always been us'd to?—Is it unreasonable to conform to the modes of life, when our own fortune can so well afford it?—

Sir Bash. She's a very reasonable woman, and I wish I had but half her sense! [*Aside.*] I'll tell you what, my Lady Constant, to avoid eternal disputes, if a sum of money, within moderate compass, would make matters easy—I know you have contracted habits in life—And I know the force of habit is not easily conquer'd.—I would not have her conquer it: my pride would be hurt if she did. [*Aside.*] And so, madam, if a brace of hundreds—Why should not I give her three hundred? [*Aside.*] I did not care if I went as far as three hundred—If three hundred pounds, my Lady Constant, will settle the matter—Why, as to the matter of three hundred pounds——

Enter FURNISH, with a Bandbox.

Fur. Your ladyship's things are come home from the milliner's. [*Showing the Bandbox.*]

Sir Bash. Zookers! this woman has overheard me!

[*Aside.*] As to the matter of three hundred pounds, madam. [*Loud, in a Passion.*] Let me tell you it is a very large sum—ask me for three hundred pounds, madam!—Do you take me for a blockhead?

Lady Con. What does the man fly out so for?

Sir Bash. What right have you to three hundred pounds? I will allow no such doings—Is not my house an eternal scene of your routs, and your drums, and your what-d'ye-call-'ems?—Don't I often come home when the hall is barricado'd with powder-monkey servants, that I can hardly get within my own doors?

Lady Con. What is the meaning of all this, sir?

Sir Bash. Have not I seen you at a game at Loo, put the fee simple of a score of my best acres upon a single card?—And have not I mutter'd to myself—If that woman now were as much in love with me, as she is with Pam, what an excellent wife she would make?

Lady Con. Yes, I have great reason to love you, truly!

Sir Bash. Death and fire!—You are so fond of play, that I should not wonder to see my child resemble one of the court cards, or mark'd in the forehead with a pair-royal of aces. I tell you, once for all, you are an ungovernable woman—Your imaginations are as wild as any woman's in Bedlam—Do, go thither, go; for I tell you once for all, I'll allow no such doings in my house. [*Exit SIR BASH.*]

Lady Con. His head is certainly turn'd!—Did any body ever see such behaviour?

Fur. See it!—no, nor bear it neither—Your ladyship will never be rightly at ease, I'm afraid, till you part with him.

Lady Con. Oh, never; it is impossible!—He not only has lost all decency, but seems to me to have bid adieu to all humanity—That it should be my

fate to be married to such a quicksand! But I'll think no more of him.

Fur. Oh, madam, I had quite forgot; Mrs. Lovemore's servant is below, and desires to know if your ladyship would be at home this morning.

Lady Con. Yes, I shall be at home—Step with me to my room, and I'll give you a card to send Mrs. Lovemore—Of all things let a woman be careful how she marries a narrow-minded, under-bred husband.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter SIR BASHFUL and LOVEMORE.

Sir Bash. Walk in, Mr. Lovemore, walk in!—I am heartily glad to see you!—This is kind.

Love. I am ready, you see, to attend the call of friendship.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, you are a friend indeed.

Love. You do me honour, Sir Bashful—Pray how does my lady?

Sir Bash. Perfectly well!—I never saw her look better—We have had t'other skirmish since I saw you.

Love. Another?

Sir Bash. Ay! Another!—And I did not bate her an ace—but I told you I had something for your private ear—Pray now, have you remark'd any thing odd or singular in me?

Love. Not the least—I never knew a man with less oddity in my life.

Sir Bash. What, nothing at all? He! he! [*Smiles at him.*] Have you remark'd nothing about my wife?

Love. You don't live happy with her—But that is not singular.

Sir Bash. Po!—I tell you, Mr. Lovemore, I am at the bottom a very odd fellow.

Love. Not at all.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes, yes,—I am—I am indeed—As

odd a fish as lives—And you must have seen it before now.

Love. Not I truly! You are not jealous, I hope?

Sir Bash. You have not hit the right nail o'the head—no—no—not jealous. Do her justice, I am secure there—My lady has high notions of honour. It is not that.

Love. What then?

Sir Bash. Can't you guess?

Love. Not I, upon my soul!—*Explain.*

Sir Bash. He, he! [*Smiling and looking simple.*] You could never have imagined it—I blush at the very thoughts of it. [*Turns away.*]

Love. Come, come, be a man, Sir Bashful—out with it at once, let me be of your council—

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I doubt you, and yet esteem you—Some men there are, who when a confidence is once repos'd in them, take occasion from thence to hold a hank over their friend, and tyrannize him all the rest of his days.

Love. Oh, fie!—This is ungenerous!—True friendship is of another quality—It feels from sympathy, and is guarded by honour.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I have no farther doubt of you—and so—Stay, stay a moment—let me just step to the door. [*Goes on Tiptoe.*]

Love. Jealousy has laid hold of him. [*Aside.*]

Sir Bash. Servants have a way of listening.

[*Pushes the Door open with both Hands.*]

Love. He has it, through his very brain! [*Aside.*] What has he got in his head!

Sir Bash. No, no—all's safe—There was nobody. Mr. Lovemore, I will make you the depositary—the faithful depositary, of a secret, which to you will appear a mystery—My inclinations, Mr. Lovemore—nay, but you'll laugh at me.

Love. No—upon my honour!—No—no.

Sir Bash. Well, well, well—my inclinations, I say,

are changed—no, not changed—but—they are not what they have appeared to be—I am in love—’Sdeath, I am quite asham’d of myself.

Love. Asham’d! Love is a noble passion—But don’t tell me any more about it—my Lady Constant will find it out, and lay the blame to me—I must not appear to encourage you—no, no—you must not involve me in a quarrel with her.

Sir Bash. Pshaw!—you don’t take me right—quite wide of the mark—hear me out.

Love. I won’t—indeed, I won’t!—

Sir Bash. Nay, but you shall, you shall—

Love. Positively no!—Let me keep clear—She shall certainly know it, and the devil’s in the dice if she does not comply with my desires from mere spirit of revenge. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. I tell you, Mr. Lovemore—the object of my passion—[*Leading him back.*]—this charming woman, on whom I doat to distraction—

Love. I don’t desire to know it.

Sir Bash. You must, you must; this adorable creature——

Love. Keep it to yourself, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Who looks so lovely in my eyes—is—

Love. I don’t desire to know.

Sir Bash. But you shall know—is—this fine woman, is—my own wife.

Love. Your own wife! [*Stares at him.*

Sir Bash. [*Looks silly, blushes, and turns away from him.*] Yes, my own wife.

Love. This is the most unexpected discovery—

Sir Bash. [*Fidling and biting his Nails.*] Look ye there now—he laughs at me already! [*Aside.*

Love. And can this be possible?—Are you really in love with my Lady Constant?—your own wife!

Sir Bash. Spare my confusion, Mr. Lovemore; spare my confusion—Ay, it’s all over with me.

Love. I should never have guess'd this, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. I have made myself very ridiculous, Mr. Lovemore: [*Looks at him and drops his Eyes.*] I know I have.

Love. Ridiculous!—far from it—Why, do you think it ridiculous, to love a valuable woman? Po! Po!—cheer up, man—and now to keep you in countenance I'll deposit a secret with you—I love my wife.

Sir Bash. What!

Love. I am in love with my wife.

Sir Bash. He! he! [*Looks at him with great Glee.*] Ha! ha!—no, no—you don't love her!—Ha! ha!—Do you, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Upon my honour!

Sir Bash. What, love your wife?

Love. Most ardently!

Sir Bash. Give me your hand—Give me your hand! He, he, he!—I am glad to know this!

Love. I love her most sincerely—But then I never let her know it—no—nor I would not have the world know it, and therefore I have led the life I have done on purpose to conceal it.

Sir Bash. You are right, Mr. Lovemore—perfectly right—I have quarrell'd with my lady on purpose to cloak the affair, and prevent all suspicion.

Love. That was right; you should keep to that.

Sir Bash. So I intend—but I have done a thousand kindnesses in the mean time.

Love. Have ye?

Sir Bash. Ay, a thousand—She has been plaguing me this long time for a diamond cross, and diamond shoe-buckles—madam, says I, I'll hear of no such trumpery—But then goes me I, and bespeaks them directly of the best jeweller in town, will come to three hundred—She'll have 'em this day, without knowing where they come from.

Love. Sly, sly. He! he!

Sir Bash. Let me alone ; I know what I'm about—
And then, Mr. Lovemore, to cover this design—Ha!
ha! I can take occasion to be as jealous as Bedlam,
when I see her wear all her diamond baubles.

Love. So you can—I wish he may never be jealous
of me in earnest. [Aside.

Sir Bash. Well, well—give us your hand—give us
your hand---my dear brother sufferer—I'll tell you
what, Mr. Lovemore---we can, in a sly way, do each
other great service, if you will come into my scheme.

Love. As how, pray?

Sir Bash. I'll tell you—There are some things,
which you know our wives expect to be done—

Love. What is he at now? [Aside] So they do, Sir
Bashful.

Sir Bash. Now, if you will assist me—

Love. You may depend upon my assistance.

Sir Bash. Look ye, Mr. Lovemore, my Lady Con-
stant wants money—You know she keeps a great deal
of company, and makes a great figure there—I could
show my wife, Mr. Lovemore, in any company in Eng-
land ; I wish she could say the same of me.

Love. Why truly, I wish she could.

Sir Bash. But I had not those early advantages—
Now you know, I can't in reason be seen to give her
money myself, so I would have you take the money
of me, and pretend to lend it to her yourself, out of
friendship and regard.

Love. Why, you're a very Machiavel—nothing was
ever better contriv'd—Here's a fellow pimping for his
own horns. [Aside.

Sir Bash. Here, here, here—take the money—here
it is in Bank Notes,---One, two, three---there's three
hundred pounds---give her that---give her that, Mr.
Lovemore—

Love. I will---This is the rarest adventure! [Aside.

Sir Bash. I'll do any thing for your wife in re-
turn—

Love. Why I may have occasion for your friendship, Sir Bashful---that is to forgive me if ever you find me out. [Aside.

Sir Bash. You may always command me---well, lose no time, she's above stairs---Step to her now, and make her easy.

Love. I'll do my endeavour, that you may rely upon---I'll make her easy if possible.

Sir Bash. That's kind, that's kind!---Well, ha! ha! ha! Mr. Lovemore, is not this a rare scheme? Ha! ha! ha!

Love. 'Tis the newest way of making a wife easy---Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, let this head of mine alone. Ha! ha!

Love. That I won't if I can help it.

[Exit LOVEMORE.

Sir Bash. Prosper you, prosper you, Mr. Lovemore! It is the luckiest thing in the world to have so good a friend! make me thankful!---he is a true friend. [SIR BRILLIANT *Within.*] Hist---Did not I hear a noise?---Is not that Sir Brilliant's voice?---I hope they won't let him in---I gave orders I would not be at home---Zookers! they are letting him in---He shan't see my lady for all that---Shan't interrupt business.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, I kiss your hand; I rejoice to see you. And my lady, how does she do? Is she at home?

Sir Bash. Do you think I have nothing to do but to know whether she is at home or not? I don't trouble my head about her, sir.

Sir Bril. Po! never talk so slightingly of so agreeable a woman---My Lady Constant has spirit, taste, sense, wit, beauty---

Sir Bash. Spirit, taste, sense, wit, beauty!--She has all that sure enough. [*Aside.*] Sir, I am no sworn appraiser to take an inventory of her effects, and set a just value upon them--I don't know what she has.

Sir Bril. Is her ladyship visible this morning?

Sir Bash. No, sir, she is invisible this morning—and unintelligible this morning--And incomprehensible this morning--She is not well—she has the vapours--She can't be spoke to—

Sir Bril. I'm sorry for it--I came to tell her the rarest piece of news—such a discovery!—

Sir Bash. Ay, what's that?

Sir Bril. You know Sir Amorous La Fool?

Sir Bash. Mighty well.

Sir Bril. Poor devil! he has got into such a scrape!

Sir Bash. What's the matter? Has he been bubbled at play?

Sir Bril. Worse, much worse.

Sir Bash. He is not dead?

Sir Bril. Why that's a scrape indeed!—But it is not that; almost as bad though.

Sir Bash. He's fallen in love with some coquet may be?

Sir Bril. No.

Sir Bash. With some prude?

Sir Bril. Nor that.

Sir Bash. An actress, may be; or an opera singer?

Sir Bril. No, you'll never guess--Like a silly devil, he has fallen in love with his own wife. Ha! ha!

Sir Bash. In love with his own wife!

[*Stares at him.*]

Sir Bril. Ha! ha!--In love with his own wife--I heard it at my Lady Betty Scandal's--there was such laughing, and so much raillery--my dear Sir Bashful, don't you enjoy it? Ha! ha! It's so ridiculous an affair--Is it not, Sir Bashful?

Sir Bash. Ha! ha!--Oh, ay, very ridiculous in-

deed! Ha! ha!---nothing can be more pleasant!--
Zoons! it's my own case directly! [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. The man is lost, abandon'd, ruin'd, dead,
and buried---You don't laugh, Sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Who I;-- I---I---I---I laugh as heartily
as I possibly can.

Sir Bril. I want to find Lovemore; he'll be so di-
verted. You know he does not care a pinch of snuff for
his wife.

Sir Bash. No, not in the least, he does not care for
her---no to be sure he does not. [*Aside.*] Not he; he
no more cares for his wife than I do for mine.

Sir Bril. Much the same. Poor Sir Amorous!
what a ridiculous figure does he make at last---adieu
for him all the joys of life! the side-box whisper, the
soft assignation, and the joys of freedom!---He is
retired with his Penelope, to love most heartily for a
month, grow indifferent to each other in two, and hate
most cordially in three---Poor devil! Ha! ha!

Sir Bash. Do you think it will end so?

Sir Bril. Most certainly. But I have not told
you the worst of his case---Our friend, Sir Charles
Wildfire, you know, was about a comedy---now what
has he done, but drawn the character of Sir Amorous
La Fool, and made him the hero of his piece.

Sir Bash. What! put him into a comedy?

Sir Bril. Ha! ha!---Yes, he has---It is call'd, "The
Amorous Husband; or the Man in love with his own
Wife."---I must send in time for places---Sir Bashful,
you shall be of the party.

Sir Bash. With great pleasure---You may be sure
it will be a very agreeable party to me---You may
depend---I shall enjoy the joke prodigiously.

Sir Bril. It will be the highest scene in nature---
well, a good day!---I must drive to a thousand places
and put it about---farewell! Apropos, be sure you
let my lady know---It will appear to her so ridi-
culous---

Sir Bash. Do you think it will?

Sir Bril. Certainly!—Well, your servant, your servant, your servant—Poor Sir Amorous La Fool, he'll have his horns added to his coat of arms in a very little time. Ha! ha! [Exit.]

Sir Bash. I see how it is; I shall get lampooned, berhymed, and niched into a comedy.—Make me thankful! nobody knows of my affair, but Mr. Lovemore—He can't discover against me, for his own sake.—

Enter LOVEMORE.

Well, Mr. Lovemore, well; how have you manag'd?

Love. Just as I could wish—She is infinitely oblig'd to me, and will never forget this civility.

Sir Bash. Ten thousand thanks to you!--She suspects nothing of my being privy to it?

Love. Not the least inkling of it.--She talk'd at first something about delicacy; and thought it rather an indecorum to accept of money even from a friend—But that argument was soon silenced—I told her, I could not but see what a bad husband you was.

Sir Bash. That was right, that was right!

Love. And then I talked a few sentences to her,—As, that the person receiving a civility confers the obligation—And that I was sure of wheedling you, in some goodnatur'd moment, to repay me—It was but making you my banker for a short time: and with more jargon to that purpose. And so, with some reluctance, she comply'd, and things are upon the footing I would have them.—Death and fury! there's my wife!

Sir Bash. Ay, and here comes my wife, too.

Love. What the devil brings her here? [Aside.]

Sir Bash. This is the rarest circumstance—Now let me see how he will carry it before Mrs. Lovemore. Walk in, walk in, Mrs. Lovemore.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE and LADY CONSTANT.

Lady Con. Mrs. Lovemore, I'm glad to see you abroad, madam.

Mrs. Love. I am highly fortunate in meeting your ladyship at home.—Mr. Lovemore, I am glad to see you too, sir.

Love. Mrs. Lovemore, I thank you.

Sir Bash. Mind him now, mind him now—My Lady Constant seems quite pleas'd—She has got the money. *[Aside.*

Mrs. Love. I thought you were gone into the city, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Why will you mind me, Mrs. Lovemore—I deferred going till evening.—What the devil business had she here! *[Aside.*

Mrs. Love. Then I may hope you'll dine at home, sir?

Love. O lord! how can you tease a man so?

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, I see how it is—he won't let her have the least suspicion of his regard. *[Aside.*

Lady Con. No doubt Mr. Lovemore will dine at home, if it gives you any satisfaction—And Sir Bashful, I reckon, will dine at home, for the contrary reason.

Sir Bash. Madam, I'll dine at home, or I'll dine abroad, for what reason I please: I am my own master, I hope, madam.—Lovemore, Lovemore! Ha! ha! *[Aside.*

Love. Bravo!—What a silly blockhead it is!

[Aside.

Mrs. Love. I see your chariot at the door, Mr. Lovemore—I'll send away my chair, and you may set me down.

Love. Ma'am, I have several places to call at.

Sir Bash. Cunning! Cunning!—He would not be seen in a chariot with her for the world. *[Aside.*

Lady Con. I am to have a rout to-morrow evening, Mrs. Lovemore: I wish you would favour us with your company.

Sir Bash. A rout to-morrow evening!—You have a rout every evening, I think.—I wish, madam, you would learn to imitate Mrs. Lovemore, and not make a fool of me as you do.—Hip, Lovemore! Ha! ha! *[Aside.*

Love. Ha! ha! Bravo!—Well, I must be gone—My Lady Constant, I have the honour to wish your ladyship a good morning. Ma'am, your most obedient; Sir Bashful, yours—Madam, you know I am yours.

[Bows gravely to MRS. LOVEMORE, and exit.

Sir Bash. He carries it off finely—Make me thankful! I have kept my own secret too, and she shall never know a word of the matter.—Mrs. Lovemore, your humble servant, madam!—Madam, you know I am yours.

[Bows gravely to LADY CONSTANT, and exit.

Mrs. Love. Two such husbands!

Lady Con. As to my swain, Mrs. Lovemore, I grant you—but you may set your mind at rest; Mr. Lovemore is at least well-bred; whereas, Sir Bashful never qualifies his disrespect with the least tincture of civility.

Mrs. Love. Well, if there is any pleasure in being made miserable with civility, I must allow Mr. Lovemore a most skilful hand.—I have found out another of his intrigues, and I came on purpose to consult with your ladyship about it: There is a Widow Bellmour to whom he pays his addresses.

Lady Con. The Widow Bellmour!—

Mrs. Love. But first give me leave, Lady Constant, to tell you the whole circumstances of the affair.

Lady Con. All scandal, take my word for it.—But, if I must hear your story, let us adjourn the debate to my dressing-room, and I will promise to confute your whole accusation.—My dear Mrs. Lovemore,

are you not tending a little towards jealousy?—Beware of that, ma'am; you must not look through that medium:

That jaundice of the mind, whose colours strike
On friend and foe, and paint them all alike,

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A Room at the WIDOW BELLMOUR'S, in which are disposed, up and down, several Chairs, a Toilette, a Bookcase, and a Harpsichord;—MIGNIONET, her Maid, is settling the Toilette.

Mig. I don't well know what to make of this same Lord Etheridge—He is coming here again to-day, I suppose; all this neatness, and all this care, must be for him. Well, it does not signify, there is a pleasure in obeying Madam Bellmour—She is a sweet lady, that's the truth of it. 'Twere a pity any of these men, with their deceitful arts, should draw her into a snare——But she knows them all—They must rise early, who can outwit her.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR, reading a Volume of Pope.

*Oh ! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray,
Can make to-morrow, cheerful as to-day ;
She who can own a sister's charms, and hear
Sighs for a daughter, with unwounded ear ;
That never answers, till a husband cools,
And if she rules him, never shows she rules :*

Sensible, elegant Pope !

*Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys.*

[Seems to read on.]

Mig. Lord love my mistress ! She's always so happy and so gay.

Mrs. Bell. These charming characters of women ! — 'Tis like a painter's gallery, where one sees the portraits of all one's acquaintance. — Here, Mignionet, put this book in its place.

Mig. Yes, ma'am. — There, ma'am, you see your toilet looks most charmingly.

Mrs. Bell. Does it ? — I think it does. — Apropos, Where's my new song ? — Here it lies — I must make myself mistress of it. — Mignionet, do you know that this is a very pretty song — 'tis written by my Lord Etheridge ; — I positively must learn it before he comes. — *[Sings a Line.]* Do you know, Mignionet, that I think my lord not wholly intolerable.

Mig. Yes, ma'am, I know that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you ?

Mig. And if I have any skill, ma'am, I fancy you think him more than tolerable.

Mrs. Bell. Really ! then you think I like him, I suppose ? — Do you think I like him ? — I don't well know how that is, — and yet I don't know but I do like him ; — no, — no, — I don't like him neither, — not

absolutely like—but I could like, if I had a mind to humour myself.—The man has a softness of manner, an elegant turn of thinking, and has a heart—has he a heart?—yes, I think he has;—and then he is such an observer of the manners,—and shows the ridiculous of them with so much humour.

Mig. Without doubt, ma'am, my lord is a pretty man enough; but lack-a-day, what o'that?—You know but very little of him,—your acquaintance is but very short— [*MRS. BELLMOUR hums a Tune.*] Do, pray, my dear madam, mind what I say,—for I am at times, I assure you, very speculative,—very speculative indeed; and I see very plainly——Lord, ma'am, what am I doing?—I am talking to you for your own good, and you are all in the air, and no more mind me, no, no more, than if I was nothing at all.—

Mrs. Bell. [*Hums a Tune still.*] Why, indeed, you talk wonderfully well upon the subject.—Do you think I shall play the fool, Mignonet, and marry my lord?

Mig. You have it, ma'am, through the very heart of you—I see that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you think so?—May be I may marry, and may be not.—Poor Sir Brilliant Fashion,—What will become of him?—But I won't think about it.

Enter POMPEY.

What's the matter, Pompey?

Pom. There's a lady below in a chair, that desires to know if you are at home, madam?

Mrs. Bell. Has the lady no name?

Pom. She did not tell her name.

Mrs. Bell. How awkward you are!—Well, show her up. [*Exit POMPEY.*]

Mig. Had not you better receive the lady in the

drawing-room, ma'am?—Things here are in such a confusion——

Mrs. Bell. No, it will do very well here. I dare say it is somebody I am intimate with, though the boy does not recollect her name.—Here she comes.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE.—They both look with a grave Surprise at each other, then courtesy with an Air of distant Civility.

Mrs. Bell. Ma'am, your most obedient.

[With a Kind of Reserve.

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg your pardon for this intrusion. *[Disconcerted.*

Mrs. Bell. Pray, ma'am, walk in——Won't you please to be seated?—Mignonet, reach a chair.

[MRS. LOVEMORE crosses the Stage, and they salute each other.

Mrs. Love. I'm afraid this visit, from one unknown to you, will be inconvenient and troublesome.

Mrs. Bell. Not at all, I dare say;—you need not be at the trouble of an apology.—Mignonet, you may withdraw. *[Exit MIGNIONET.*

Mrs. Love. Though I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, ma'am, there is a particular circumstance which has determined me to take this liberty with you; for which I intreat your pardon.

Mrs. Bell. The request is wholly unnecessary;—but a particular circumstance, you say——Pray, ma'am, to what circumstance am I indebted for this honour?

Mrs. Love. I shall appear perhaps very ridiculous, and indeed I am afraid I have done the most absurd thing——But, ma'am, from the character you bear for tenderness of disposition and generosity of sentiment, I easily incline to flatter myself, you will not take offence at any thing; and that if it is in your power, you will afford me your assistance.

Mrs. Bell. You may depend upon me.

Mrs. Love. I will be very ingenuous:—Pray, ma'am, an't you acquainted with a gentleman whose name is Lovemore?

Mrs. Bell. Lovemore!—No;—no such person in my list.—Lovemore!—I don't know him, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg your pardon—I won't trouble you any farther. [Going.]

Mrs. Bell. 'Tis mighty odd, this—[*Aside.*] Madam, I must own my curiosity is a good deal excited;—[*Takes her by the Hand.*] Pray, ma'am, give me leave—I beg you will sit down,—pray don't think me impertinent—may I beg to know who the gentleman is?

Mrs. Love. You have such an air of frankness and generosity, that I will open myself to you.—I have been married to him these two years; I admired my husband for his understanding, his sentiment, and his spirit; I thought myself as sincerely loved by him as my fond heart could wish; but there is of late such a strange revolution in his temper, I know not what to make of it:—instead of the looks of affection, and expressions of tenderness, with which he used to meet me, 'tis nothing now but cold, averted, superficial civility.—While abroad, he runs on in a wild career of pleasure; and, to my deep affliction, has fix'd his affections upon another object.

Mrs. Bell. If you mean to consult with me in regard to this case, I am afraid you have made a wrong choice;—there is something in her appearance that affects me—[*Aside.*] Pray excuse me, ma'am, you consider this matter too deeply—Men will prove false, and if there is nothing in your complaint but mere gallantry on his side,—upon my word, I can't think your case the worse for that.

Mrs. Love. Not the worse!—

Mrs. Bell. On the contrary, much better. If his

affections, instead of being alienated, had been extinguished, he would have sunk into a downright stupid, habitual insensibility ; from which it might prove impossible to recal him.—In all love's bill of mortality, there is not a more fatal disorder ;—but your husband is not fallen into that way. By your account, he still has sentiment, and where there is sentiment, there is still room to hope for an alteration.—But in the other case, you have the pain of seeing yourself neglected, and for what ?—for nothing at all ;—the man has lost all sense of feeling, and is become, to the warm beams of wit and beauty, as impenetrable as an ice-house.

Mrs. Love. I am afraid, ma'am, he is too much the reverse of this, too susceptible of impressions from every beautiful object.

Mrs. Bell. Why, so much the better, as I told you already ;—some new idea has struck his fancy, and he will be for a while under the influence of that.

Mrs. Love. How light she makes of it ! [Aside.

Mrs. Bell. But it is the wife's business to bait the hook for her husband with variety ; and to draw him daily to herself :—that is the whole affair, I would not make myself uneasy, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Not uneasy ! when his indifference does not diminish my regard for him !—Not uneasy ! when the man I doat on no longer fixes his happiness at home !

Mrs. Bell. Ma'am, you'll give me leave to speak my mind freely.—I have often observ'd, when the fiend jealousy is rous'd, that women lay out a wonderful deal of anxiety and vexation to no account ; when perhaps, if the truth were known, they should be angry with themselves instead of their husbands.

Mrs. Love. Angry with myself, madam !—calumny can lay nothing to my charge,—the virtue of my conduct, madam—— [Rises.

Mrs. Bell. Oh, I would have laid my life, you

would be at that work—that's the folly of us all.—But virtue is out of the question at present. It is *la Belle Nature*,—Nature embellished by the advantages of art, that the men expect now-a-days;—and really, ma'am, without compliment, you seem to have all the qualities that can dispute your husband's heart with anybody; but the exertion of those qualities, I am afraid, is suppressed.—You'll excuse my freedom, I have been married, ma'am, and am a little in the secret.—It is much more difficult to keep a heart than win one—After the fatal words, “For better for worse,” the general way with wives is; to relax into indolence, and while they are guilty of no infidelity, they think that is enough:—but they are mistaken; there is a great deal wanting—an address, a manner, a desire of pleasing——

Mrs. Love. But when the natural temper—

Mrs. Bell. The natural temper must be forced—Home must be made a place of pleasure to the husband, and the wife must throw infinite variety into her manner. And this, I take to be the whole mystery, the way to keep a man.—But I run on at a strange rate—Well, to be sure, I'm the giddiest creature.—Ma'am, will you now give me leave to inquire, how I came to have this favour?—Who recommended me to your notice?—And pray, who was so kind as to intimate that I was acquainted with Mr. Lovemore?

Mrs. Love. I beg your pardon for all the trouble I have given you, and I assure you, 'tis entirely owing to my being told that his visits were frequent here.

Mrs. Bell. His visits frequent here!—They have imposed upon you, I assure you—and they have told you, perhaps, that I have robbed you of Mr. Lovemore's heart?—Scandal is always buzzing about; but, I assure you, I have not meddled with his heart—

O lud ! I hear a rap at the door—I positively won't be at home.

Enter MIGNIONET.

Mig. Did you call, madam ?

Mrs. Bell. I am not at home.

Mig. 'Tis Lord Etheridge, ma'am,—he's coming up stairs; the servants told him you were within.

Mrs. Bell. Was ever any thing so cross ? Tell him, there is company with me, and he won't come in.—Mignionet, run to him.

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg I mayn't hinder you.

Mrs. Bell. Our conversation begins to grow interesting, and I would not have you go for the world.—I won't see my lord.

Mrs. Love. I beg you will—don't let me prevent—I'll step into another room.

Mrs. Bell. Will you be so kind ?—There are books in that room, if you will be so obliging as to amuse yourself there. I shall be glad to resume this conversation again.—He shan't stay long.

Mrs. Love. I beg you will be in no hurry—I can wait with pleasure.

Mrs. Bell. This is a lover of mine ; and a husband and a lover should be treated in the same manner ;—perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him on the stairs—for Heaven's sake, make haste. Mignionet, show the way.

[*Excunt MRS. LOVEMORE and MIGNIONET.*

Mrs. Bell. Let me see how I look to receive him.—[*Runs to her Glass.*—

Enter LOVEMORE, with a Star and Ribband, as LORD ETHERIDGE.

[*Looking in her Glass.*] Lord Etheridge ! Walk in, my lord

Love. [Repeats.] *A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
Repairs her smiles——*

Mrs. Bell. Repairs her smiles, my lord! I don't like your application of that phrase—Pray, my lord, are my smiles out of repair; like an old house in the country, that wants a tenant?

Love. Nay now, that's wresting the words from their visible intention.—You can't suppose I thought you want repair, whatever may be the case, ma'am, with regard to the want of a tenant?

Mrs. Bell. And so you think I really want a tenant? And perhaps you imagine too, that I am going to put up a bill, [*Looking in her Glass.*] to signify to all passers by, that here is a mansion to let?—Well, I swear, I don't think it would be a bad scheme.—I have a great mind to do so.

Love. And he who has the preference——

Mrs. Bell. Will be very happy—I know you mean so. But I'll let it to none but a single gentleman, that you may depend upon.

Love. What the devil does she mean by that! She has not got an inkling of the affair, I hope. [*Aside.*] None else could presume, madam, to——

Mrs. Bell. And then, it must be a lease for life—But nobody will be troubled with it—I shall never get it off my hands.—Do you think I shall, my lord?

Love. Why that question, madam? You know I am devoted to you, even if it were to be bought with life.

Mrs. Bell. Heav'ns! what a dying swain you are! And does your lordship really intend to be guilty of matrimony?—Lord, what a question have I asked?—Well, to be sure, I am a very mad-cap!—My lord, don't you think me a strange mad-cap?

Love. A wildness, like yours, that arises from vivacity and sentiment together, serves only to exalt your beauty, and give new poignancy to every charm.

Mrs. Bell. Well, upon my word, you have said it finely!—But you are in the right, my lord,—I hate your pensive, melancholy beauty, that sits like a well-grown vegetable in a room for an hour together, 'till at last she is animated to the violent exertion of saying yes, or no, and then enters into a matter-of-fact conversation.—“Have you heard the news? Miss Beverly is going to be married to Captain Shoulder-knot. My Lord Mortgage has had another tumble at Arthur's. Sir William Squanderstock has lost his election. They say, short aprons are coming into fashion again.”

Love. O lord! a matter-of-fact conversation is insupportable.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, my lord, have you ever observed the manner of one lady's accosting another at Ranelagh?—She comes up to you with a demure look of insipid serenity,—makes you a solemn salute——“Ma'am, I am overjoyed to meet you,—you look charmingly.—But, dear ma'am, did you hear what happened to us all the other night?—We were going home from the opera, ma'am—you know my aunt Rolypoly—it was her coach—there was she, and Lady Betty Fidget—Your most obedient servant, ma'am—— [*Courtesying to another, as it were going by.*] Lady Betty, you know, is recovered—every body thought it over with her—but Doctor Snakeroot was called in—no, not Doctor Snakeroot, Doctor Bolus it was—and so he altered the course of medicine—and so my Lady Betty recovered:—Well, there was she and Sir George Bragwell,—a pretty man, Sir George—finest teeth in the world—Your ladyship's most obedient. We expected you last night, but you did not come—he! he!—And so, there was he and the rest of us,—and so, turning the corner of Bond Street, the villain of a coachman——

How do you do, madam?—the villain of a coachman overturned us all;—my aunt Rolypoly was frightened out of her wits, and Lady Betty has been nervish ever since:—Only think of that,—such accidents in life.—Ma'am, your most obedient—I am proud to see you look so well."

Love. An exact description—the very thing—Ha! ha!

Mrs. Bell. And then, from this conversation they all run to cards,—“Quadrille has murdered wit.”

Love. Ay, and beauty too; for upon these occasions, “the passions in the features are—” I have seen many a beautiful countenance change in a moment into absolute deformity; the little loves and graces, that before sparkled in the eye, bloom'd in the cheek, and smil'd about the mouth, all fly off in an instant, and resign the features which they before adorn'd, to fear, to anger, to grief, and the whole train of fretful passions.

Mrs. Bell. Ay, and the rage we poor women are often betrayed into on these occasions——

Love. Very true, ma'am; and if by chance they do bridle and hold in a little, the struggle they undergo is the most ridiculous sight imaginable.—I have seen an oath quivering upon the pale lip of a reigning toast, for half an hour together, and then at last, when the whole room burst out into one loud universal uproar—“My lord, you flung away the game—No, ma'am, it was you—Sir George, why did not you rough the diamond?—Captain Hazard, why did not you lead through the honour?—Ma'am, it was not the play.—Pardon me, sir——But, ma'am——But, sir—I would not play with you for straws.—Don't you know what Hoyle says?—If A and B are partners against C and D, and the game nine-all, A and B have won three tricks, and C and D four tricks, C leads his suit, D puts up the king, then returns the suit, A passes, C puts up the queen, B trumps the next:” And so, A and B, and C and D, are banged

about, and all is jargon, confusion, uproar, and wrangling, and nonsense, and noise.—Ha! ha!

Mrs. Bell. Ha! ha! A fine picture of a rout;—but one must play sometimes—we must let our friends pick our pockets sometimes, or they'll drop our acquaintance.—Pray, my lord, do you never play?

Love. Play, ma'am!—I must lie to the end of the chapter—[*Aside.*] play! now and then, out of necessity;—otherwise, I never touch a card.

Mrs. Bell. Oh! very true, you dedicate your time to the muses; a downright rhyming peer.—Do you know, my lord, that I am charmed with your song?

Love. Are you?

Mrs. Bell. I am indeed. I think you'd make a very tolerable Vauxhall poet.

Love. You flatter me, ma'am.

Mrs. Bell. No, as I live and breathe, I don't;—and do you know, that I can sing it already?—Come, you shall hear me,—you shall hear it. [Sings.]

SONG.

I.

*Attend all ye fair, and I'll tell ye the art,
To bind every fancy with ease in your chains,
To hold in soft fetters the conjugal heart,
And banish from Hymen his doubts and his pains.*

II.

*When Juno accepted the cestus of love,
At first she was handsome; she charming became;
With skill the soft passions it taught her to move,
To kindle at once, and to keep up the flame.*

III.

*'Tis this gives the eyes all their magic and fire;
The voice melting accents; impassions the kiss;
Confers the sweet smiles, that awaken desire,
And plants round the fair, each incentive to bliss.*

IV.

*Thence flows the gay chat, more than reason that charms;
The eloquent blush, that can beauty improve;
The fond sigh, the fond vow, the soft touch that alarms,
The tender disdain, the renewal of love.*

V.

*Ye fair, take the cestus, and practise its art;
The mind unaccomplish'd, mere features are vain,
Exert your sweet pow'r, you will conquer each heart,
And the loves, joys, and graces, shall walk in your
train.*

Love. My poetry is infinitely obliged to you for the embellishments, your voice and manner confer upon it.

Mrs. Bell. O, fulsome!—I sing horridly, and I look horridly.—[*Goes to the Glass.*] How do I look, my lord?—But don't tell me—I won't be told.—I see you are studying a compliment, and I hate compliments;—well, what is it? let's hear your compliment—why don't you compliment me?—I won't hear it now.—But pray now, how came you to chuse so grave a subject as connubial happiness?

Love. Close and particular that question. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Bell. Well, upon my word, you have drawn your picture so well in this little song, that one would imagine you had a wife at home to sit for it.

Love. Ma'am—[*Embarrassed.*] the compliment—a—you are but laughing at me—I—I—I—Zounds! I am afraid she begins to suspect me.—[*Aside.*] A very scanty knowledge of the world will serve: and—and there is no need of one's own experience in these cases:—and when you, madam, are the original, it is no wonder that this copy—

Mrs. Bell. O lard, you are going to plague me again with your odious solicitations, but I won't hear them;—you must be gone.—If I should be weak enough to listen to you, what would become of Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. Sir Brilliant Fashion!

Mrs. Bell. Yes, don't you know Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. No, ma'am, I don't know the gentleman:—I beg pardon, if he is your acquaintance, but from what I have heard of him, I should not chuse him to be among my intimates.

Enter MIGNIONET, in a violent Hurry.

Mig. O, undone! undone!

Mrs. Bell. What's the matter?

Mig. O lud! I am frightened out of my senses!—The poor lady—Where's the hartshorn drops?—

Love. The lady! What lady?

Mig. Never stand asking what lady—she has fainted away, ma'am, all of a sudden.—Give me the drops.— [Exit.

Mrs. Bell. Let me run to her assistance.—Adieu, my lord,—I shall be at home in the evening.—My lord, you'll excuse me; I expect you in the evening. [Exit.

Love. I shall wait on you, ma'am.—What a villain am I to carry on this scheme against so much beauty, innocence and merit.—Ay, and to have the impudence to assume this badge of honour, to cover the most unwarrantable purposes!—But no reflection—have her I must, and that quickly too.—If I don't prevail soon, I am undone—she'll find me out:—egad, I'll be with her betimes this evening, and press her with all the vehemence of love.—Women have their soft, unguarded moments, and who knows?—But to take the advantage of the openness and gaiety of her

heart! And then, my friend Sir Brilliant, will it be fair to supplant him?—Pr'ythee, be quiet, my dear conscience; don't you be meddling; don't you interrupt a gentleman in his amusements. Don't you know, my good friend, that love has no respect of persons, knows no laws of friendship;—besides, 'tis all my wife's fault—why don't she strive to make home agreeable?

*For foreign pleasures, foreign joy, I roam,
No thought of peace, or happiness at home.*

[Going.

[SIR BRILLIANT is heard singing within.]

What the devil is Madam Fortune at now?—Sir Brilliant, by all that's odious!—No place to conceal in!—No escape!—The door is lock'd!—Mignonet, Mignonet! open the door!

Mignonet. [Within.] You can't come in here, sir.

Love. This cursed star, and this ribband, will ruin me.—Let me get off this confounded tell-tale evidence.

[Takes off the Ribband in a Hurry.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. My dear madam, I most heartily rejoice—Ha!—Lovemore!

Love. Your slave, Sir Brilliant, your slave—

[Hiding the Star with his Hat.

Sir Bril. How is this?—I did not think you had been acquainted here!

Love. I came to look for you,—I thought to have found you here;—and so I have scrap'd an acquaintance with the lady, and made it subservient to your purposes.—I have been giving a great character of you.

Sir Bril. Well, but what's the matter?—What are you fumbling about?

[Pulls the Hat.

Love. 'Sdeath, have a care!—for Heaven's sake—
[Crams his Handkerchief there.]

Sir Bril. What the devil ails you?

Love. Taken so unaccountably; my old complaint——

Sir Bril. What complaint?

Love. I must have a surgeon,—occasioned by the stroke of a tennis-ball;—my Lord Rackett's unlucky left hand.—Let me pass—there is something forming there—let me pass.—To be caught is the devil.—
[*Aside.*] Don't name my name, you'll ruin all that I said for you, if you do.—Sir Brilliant, your servant——There is certainly something forming. [Exit.]

Sir Bril. Something forming there—I believe there is something forming here!—What can this mean?—I must have this explain'd.—Then Mrs. Lovemore's suspicions are right; I must come at the bottom of it.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR.

My dear Mrs. Bellmour!—

Mrs. Bell. Heavens! What brings you here?

Sir Bril. I congratulate with myself upon the felicity of meeting you thus at home.

Mrs. Bell. Your visit is unseasonable—you must be gone.

Sir Bril. Madam, I have a thousand things—

Mrs. Bell. Well, well, another time.

Sir Bril. Of the tenderest import.

Mrs. Bell. I can't hear you now;—fly this moment!—I have a lady taken ill in the next room.

Sir Bril. Ay, and you have had a gentleman taken ill here too.

Mrs. Bell. Do you dispute my will and pleasure?—fly this instant. [Turns him out.] So—I'll make sure of the door.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, leaning on MIGNIONET.

Mig. This way, madam, here's more air in this room.

Mrs. Bell. How do you find yourself, ma'am? Pray sit down. *[She sits.]*

Mrs. Love. My spirits are too weak to bear up any longer against such a scene of villainy.

Mrs. Bell. Villainy! What villainy?

Mrs. Love. Of the blackest dye!—I see, madam, you are acquainted with my husband.

Mrs. Bell. Acquainted with your husband!

Mrs. Love. A moment's patience;—that gentleman that was here with you, is my husband! *[Rises.]*

Mrs. Bell. Lord Etheridge your husband?

Mrs. Love. Lord Etheridge, as he calls himself, and as you have been made to call him also, is no other than Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. And has he then been base enough to assume that title, to ensnare me to my undoing?

Mrs. Love. To see my husband carrying on this dark business,—to see the man I have loved—the man I have esteem'd—the man I am afraid I must still love, though esteem him again I cannot, to be a witness to his complicated wickedness, it was too much for sensibility like mine—I felt the shock too severely, and sunk under it.

Mrs. Bell. I am ready to do the same myself now—I sink into the very ground with amazement. The first time I ever saw him, was at Mrs. Loveit's—she introduced him to me; the appointment was of her own making.

Mrs. Love. You know her character, I suppose, madam?

Mrs. Bell. She's a woman of fashion, and sees a great deal of good company.

Mrs. Love. Very capable of such an action for all that.

Mrs. Bell. Well, I could never have imagined that any woman would be so base as to pass such a cheat upon me.—Step this moment, and give orders never to let him within my doors again. [*Exit MIGNIONET.*] I am much obliged to you, madam, for this visit ;—to me it is highly fortunate, but I am sorry for your share in't, as the discovery brings you nothing but the conviction of your husband's baseness.

Mrs. Love. I am determined to be no further uneasy about him ; nor will I live a day longer under his roof.

Mrs. Bell. Hold ! hold ! make no violent resolutions.—You'll excuse me—I can't help feeling for you, and I think this incident may be still converted to your advantage.

Mrs. Love. That can never be—I am lost beyond redemption.

Mrs. Bell. Don't decide that too rashly.—Besides, you have heard his sentiments.—Perhaps you are a little to blame yourself. We will talk this matter over coolly—Ma'am, you have saved me, and I must now discharge the obligation.—You shall stay and dine with me.

Mrs. Love. I can't possibly do that—I won't give you so much trouble.

Mrs. Bell. It will be a pleasure, ma'am—you shall stay with me—I will not part with you ; and I will lay such a plan as may ensure him yours for ever.—Come, come, my dear madam, don't you still think he has some good qualities to apologize for his vices?

Mrs. Love. I must own, I still hope he has.

Mrs. Bell. Very well then, and he may still make atonement for all ;—and, let me tell you, that a man who can make proper atonement for his faults, should not be entirely despised.—Allons—Come, come, a man is worth thinking a little about, before one throws the hideous thing away for ever. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT'S.

Enter LADY CONSTANT, *with a Card*, and FURNISH.

Lady Con. Is the servant waiting?

Fur. He is, madam.

Lady Con. Very well—I need not write—Give my humble service to Mrs. Lovemore, and I shall certainly wait on her.

Fur. I shall, madam.

[*Going.*

Lady Con. Has the servant carried back the things to Sir Brilliant Fashion, as I ordered?

Fur. We expect him back every moment, madam.

Lady Con. The insolence of that man, to think he can bribe me with his odious presents!—Very well, go and send my answer to Mrs. Lovemore.—[*Exit FURNISH.*] What can this mean? [*Reads.*

Begs the favour of her ladyship's company to cards this evening.—Cards at Mrs. Lovemore's—there's something new in that.—[Reads.] Hopes her ladyship will not refuse, as it is a very particular affair requires Mrs. Lovemore's friends to be present.—

There is some mystery in all this——What can it be?——

Enter SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT.

Sir Bash. Here she is——Now let me see whether she will take any notice of the diamond buckles——Your servant, madam.

Lady Con. Your servant, sir.

Sir Bash. You seem out of humour, I think.

Lady Con. And considering that you never give me cause, that's very strange, is it not?

Sir Bash. My Lady Constant, if you did not give me cause.—

Lady Con. For Heaven's sake, sir, let us have no more disagreeable altercation—I am tired of your violence of temper; your frequent starts of passion, and unaccountable fancies, which you too often mistake for realities.

Sir Bash. Fancies, madam! When do I take fancies for realities?—Do I only fancy that you are eternally making exorbitant demands upon me for money, for the various articles of your expenses? And when you were for ever teasing me for diamonds, and I know not what, was that a fancy I had taken into my head without foundation?

Lady Con. Pray, sir, let us not dispute—I promise you, never to trouble you on that head again.

Sir Bash. She has received them I see, and is obstinately resolved not to tell me. [*Aside.*] Madam, I will not render myself ridiculous in the eyes of the world, for your whims.

Lady Con. Nor will I, sir, be ridiculous any longer on account of your caprice.—I have wrote to my Solicitor to attend me here to-morrow morning with the articles of separation; and I presume, sir, that you can have no objection to their being carried into execution.—I have no time now to squander in fri-

volous debates, I must prepare to go out.—Your servant, sir. *[Exit.]*

Sir Bash. I must unburden myself at last!—Must disclose the secrets of my heart—She has possessed my very soul;—is ever present to my imagination;—mingles with all my thoughts;—inflames my tenderest passions, and raises such a conflict here—I cannot any longer keep this fire pent up—I'll throw myself open to her this very moment—Is any body in the way?

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Where's your mistress?

Side. In her own room, sir.

Sir Bash. Draw that table over this way—A letter will do the business—It shall be so.—Reach me a chair.—You blockhead, why don't you reach a chair?

Side. There, your honour.

Sir Bash. Do you stay while I write a letter—You shall carry it for me. *[He sits down to write.]*

Side. Yes, sir—I hope he has got some intrigue upon his hands—A servant always thrives under a master that has his private amusements.—Love on, say I, if you are so given; it will all bring grist to my mill.

Sir Bash. This will be a strange surprise upon my Lady Constant—Soft, passionate, and tender, so far,—and yet it does not come up to what I feel. It is a hard thing, in excessive love like mine, to speak as delicately as we think, to the person that we adore. *[Writes on.]*

Side. Let me see if there is any news in the paper of to-day. *[Takes a Newspaper out of his Pocket and reads.]* What in the name of wonder is all this?—O lord! O lord!—I can't help laughing—Ha! ha!—I never heard of the like before—Ha! ha!

Sir Bash. What does this rascal mean? [*Stares at him.*] He does not suspect me, does he?

Side. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Bash. [*Stares still at him.*] Perhaps he overheard my conversation with Mr. Lovemore—Harkye, sirrah! [*Rises.*] if ever I find that you dare listen at any door in the house, I'll cut your ears off, I will.

Side. Sir!—

Sir Bash. Confess the truth;—have not you been listening and overhearing my conversation?

Side. Who, I sir?—Not I, sir; as I hope to live, sir, I would not be guilty of such a thing, sir, for ever so much—I never did the like in my born days.

Sir Bash. What was you laughing at, rascal?

Side. An article, sir, I found in the newspaper, that's all, sir—I'll read it to you, sir—— [*Reads.*

We hear that a new comedy is now in rehearsal at one of the theatres, and will speedily be perform'd, entitled, The Amorous Husband; or, The Man in Love with his own Wife.

Sir Bash. Sir Brilliant told me truth, I see. [*Aside.*] —Well, and what do you see to laugh at there, sir?

Side. Lord bless me, sir, I never heard of the like before,—I have served in a great many families, and I never heard of such a thing.

Sir Bash. Lookye there now!—[*Aside.*] Sirrah! let me never hear that you have the trick of listening at any of my doors.

Side. No, sir—to be sure, sir—What has he got in his head?

Sir Bash. Wounds! I shall be laugh'd at by my own servants.—But no more scruples—pass that by; it shall all out—[*Sits down.*] That fellow has so disconcerted me!—There, I have laid my whole heart open to her—I'll seal it directly.—Here, take this, and bring me an answer—And, do you hear?—

come hither—mind what I say; take care that nobody sees you.

Side. I warrant, sir.

[*Exit* SIDEBOARD.]

Sir Bash. I feel as if a load was off my breast—and yet I fear—but I'm embark'd, and so I'll wait the event.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Side. A word or two by way of direction, sir, would not be amiss.

Sir Bash. Blockhead!—Have not I directed it?

[*Takes it back.*]

Side. I could never have suspected him of having an intrigue. [Aside.]

Sir Bash. This rascal does not know the secret of my heart, and he shall remain so—Lovemore shall open the affair to her—I am glad I have not trusted him—should I direct this, the fellow would find me out—You may go about your business, Sideboard—I don't want you.

Side. Very well, sir—what's he at now?—If he does not let me manage his intrigues for him, I'll give him warning. [Exit.]

Sir Bash. Ay, Mr. Lovemore shall do it—the explanation will be more natural and easy from him.—This scoundrel is coming again—no, it is not he.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Sir Bash. Ha! Mr. Lovemore!—I am glad to see you!—Mr. Lovemore, you are heartily welcome!

Love. You see me here this second time to-day, Sir Bashful, entirely on the score of friendship.

Sir Bash. I thank you, Mr. Lovemore; heartily thank you!

Love. I broke away from company on purpose to attend you—they would have had me stay the even-

ing,—but I have more pleasure in serving my friends
—Well, how does my lady?

Sir Bash. We don't hit at all, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. No?

Sir Bash. No, no—not at all—I think she has been rather worse since you spoke to her.

Love. A good symptom, that. [Aside.

Sir Bash. She still talks of parting; and has even sent to her lawyer about it.—Obstinate as a mule, Mr. Lovemore!—has had the diamond buckles, and sulky still—not one word about them.

Love. Time will bring things about—

Sir Bash. Po! there is not a moment to be lost.—She is set upon it, Mr. Lovemore; and when she sets in, she blows like a trade wind, all one way,—and so, to prevent extremities, I have e'en thought of explaining myself to her.

Love. What! acquaint her with your passion?

Sir Bash. Yes, and trust to her honour.—I know I could not do it myself in person—I should blush, and look silly, and falter—So I e'en set down to write her a letter—here it is, Mr. Lovemore, signed and sealed—but it is not directed—I got into a puzzle about that—for my servant, you know, would wonder at my writing a letter to her.

Love. So he would.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes, he would have smok'd me,—but you are come most opportune—I'll tell you what, you shall direct it and send it to her—Nobody will be a jot the wiser.

Love. Well, I'll take it home with me, and send it to her to-morrow morning.

Sir Bash. No, no; now, directly now.

Love. I'll step to her then and speak for you—Why should you send a letter—If it does not take, she has you in her power—you can't go back—She'll have it under your hand.

Sir Bash. Why, that's true—that's true—And yet if I can obtain a letter from her, I shall have it under her hand.—It must be so—If you go, she'll send a verbal answer by you, and then deny it afterwards.

Love. But I shall be a witness against her.

Sir Bash. That will never do—I shall this way draw her in to write a letter, and then I shall have her bound down.

Love. Better take a little time to consider of it.

Sir Bash. No, no, I can't defer it a moment; it burns like a fever here—I must have immediate relief; Mr. Lovemore, you must be my friend—Sit you down, and direct it for me—I'll step and send my servant to carry it for you—Sit down, sit down.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Side. Sir Brilliant Fashion, sir, is below.

Sir Bash. Sir Brilliant Fashion!—Rascal! why did you say I was at home?

Side. I had no orders to the contrary, sir.

Love. 'Sdeath, he must not come up—Step to him, Sir Bashful; amuse him, talk to him; tell him the news, any thing, rather than let him come hither to interrupt us.

Sir Bash. No, no, he shan't come up.

Love. By no means; and be sure you don't let him know that I am here—The fellow follows me every where I go. [*Aside.*

Sir Bash. Never fear—He shan't come near you—and in the mean time, be sure you direct the letter.

Love. I will; but you lose time; away; begone! [*Pushes him out.*] A lucky accident this—I have gain'd time by it—what in the name of wonder has he wrote to her?—I am defeated if this preposterous fellow brings things to an explanation—matters were in a fine train, and he himself levelling the road for me; and now, if this takes, I am blown up into the air at once: some unlucky planet rules to-day—First

the Widow Bellmour—and now this will-o'the-wisp—what can he have wrote to her?—Friendship and wafer, by your leave—but will that be delicate? No—but 'twill be convenient. [*Opens it.*] This letter shall never go—I'll write another myself—a lucky thought!—I absolve my stars—here is every thing ready—[*Sits down.*]—What shall I say?—Any thing will do—

[*Reads and writes.*

Why should I conceal, my dear madam, that your charms have touch'd my heart?—Um—loved you long; adored—Um—Um—flatter—Um—Um—Um—happiest of mankind—Um—Um—Um—sweetest revenge—Um—Um—husband—Um—Um—Um—Um—Um—Secret pleasure of rewarding the tenderness of your sincerest admirer LOVEMORE.
This will do—Let me seal it, and now direct it.

Enter SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT.

Sir Bash. Well, well, have you sent it?

Love. No. Your servant has not been with me yet.

Sir Bash. Sideboard! why don't you wait on the gentleman as I order'd—Sideboard—I have got rid of Sir Brilliant.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. Yes, yes, I would not let him come up for the world.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

Sir Bash. Here, Sirrah! Mr. Lovemore wants you.

Love. Master Sideboard, you must step to your lady with this letter.

Sir Bash. Charming! Charming! Ha! ha! [*Aside.*] You must take it up to her directly.

Side. Take it up, sir; my lady's in the next room.

Sir Bash. Is she? then take it in there then to her—make haste—begone! [*Exit SIDEBOARD.*

Love. No danger in this, she'll know her own interest, and have prudence to conceal every thing.

[*Aside.*

Sir Bash. I hope this will succeed, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I hope it will.

Sir Bash. I shall for ever be oblig'd to you—and so will my lady too.

Love. I dare believe she won't prove ungrateful.

Sir Bash. Hush! hush!—I should like to see how she receives it—See, the door is conveniently open. [*Goes on Tiptoe to the Door.*] Yes, yes, I can see her—there she sits.

[*Peeping.*

Love. Methinks, I should like to observe her too.

Sir Bash. Hush—no noise.

[*Aside.*

Love. Now, my dear boy, Cupid, incline her heart.

[*Aside.*

Sir Bash. She has got it! She has got it!—I am frightened out of my wits!

Love. Hold your tongue—She opens it.—My dear Venus, now or never!

[*Aside.*

Sir Bash. She colours.

Love. I like that rising blush—A tender token.

Sir Bash. She turns pale!

Love. The natural working of the passions.

Sir Bash. And now she reddens again—In disorder too—Death and fury, she tears the letter!—I'm undone!

[*Walks away from the Door.*

Love. She has flung it from her with indignation—I'm undone too!

[*Goes from the Door.*

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, you see what it's all come to!

Love. I am sorry to see it come to this, indeed.

Sir Bash. Did you ever see such an insolent scorn?

Love. I never was so disappointed in all my life.

Sir Bash. An absurd, ungrateful woman!

Love. Ungrateful indeed!—To make such a return to so kind a letter.

Sir Bash. Yes, to so kind a letter.

Love. So full of the tenderest protestations.

Sir Bash. You say right—the tenderest protestations!

Love. So generous, so unreserved a declaration of love!

Sir Bash. Made with the greatest openness of heart—throwing one's self at her feet.

Love. Very true; throwing one's self at her very feet.

Sir Bash. And then to be spurned, kicked, and treated like a puppy!

Love. Ay, there it stings—to be treated like a puppy!

Sir Bash. I can't bear this!—My dear Mr. Lovemore, do you know in nature a thing so mortifying to the pride of man, as to be rejected and despised by a fine woman?

Love. Oh, 'tis the damn'dest thing in the world—makes a man look so mean in his own eyes.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I'm heartily obliged to you for taking this affair so much to heart.

Love. I take it more to heart than you are aware of, I assure you.

Sir Bash. You are very kind indeed—This is enough to make one ashamed all the rest of one's life.

[Both speak these broken Sentences in a Kind of Reverie.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, Sir Bashful! I forgot to tell you the highest thing—Hey! what's the matter here?

Love. 'Sdeath! what brings him here again?

[*Aside.*

Sir Bril. You seem both out of humour.

Sir Bash. The blockheads of servants to let him in!

[*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, but this is very odd!—Perhaps Lovemore is borrowing money of you, Sir Bashful, and you can't agree about the premium?

Sir Bash. Pressing business, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. Po! po!—he's a very honest fellow; let him have the money—By the way, Lovemore, I have a crow to pluck with you.

Love. Well, well, another time.—He haunts me up and down like my evil genius! [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Well, but you both look very grave upon it.—As you will;—you have not the same reason to be in harmony with yourselves that I have—Here, here!—I came back on purpose to tell you—[*takes a Shagreen Case out of his Pocket.*] See here, my boys! See what a present has been made me!—A magnificent pair of diamond buckles, by Jupiter!

Love. How!

Sir Bash. A pair of diamond buckles!

Sir Bril. A pair of diamond buckles, sir:—How such a thing should be sent to me, I can't conceive—but so it is—The consequence of having some tolerable phrase, a person, and being attentive to the service of the ladies.

Sir Bash. And this was sent you as a present?

Sir Bril. Ay, as a present.—Do you envy me?

Sir Bash. I can't say but I do—My buckles, Mr. Lovemore, by all that's false in woman.

[*Aside to LOVEMORE.*

Love. Ay, he's the happy man, I see. [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Both burning with envy, by Jupiter!

[*Aside.*

Sir Bash. But may not this be from some lady, that imagines you sent them to her, and so she chuses to reject your present?

Sir Bril. No, no,—no such thing!—Had I presented the buckles, they would never have been returned.—Ladies don't reject presents, my dear Sir

Bashful, from the man that is agreeable in their eyes.

Sir Bash. So I believe——What a jade it is!

[*Aside.*

Love. She would not have torn a letter from him.

[*Aside.*

Sir Bril. No, no, had I sent them to a lady, take my word for it, they would have been very acceptable.

Sir Bash. So I suppose——I make no doubt but she'll give him my three hundred pounds too!

[*Aside.*

Love. That he should be my rival, and overtop me thus!

[*Aside.*

Sir Bash. And pray now, Sir Brilliant—I suppose you expect to have this lady?

Sir Bril. This is the forerunner of it, I think.—Ha! ha! Sir Bashful!—Mr. Lovemore, this it is to be in luck!—Ha! ha! ha!

[*Laughs at both.*

Sir Bash. } Ha! ha!

Love.

[*Forcing a Laugh,*

Sir Bash. Very well, my Lady Constant!—very well, madam—very well!

[*Aside.*

Sir Bril. I swear you both are strangely piqued at my success—Sir Bashful, observe how uneasy Lovemore looks.

Love. You wrong me, sir :—I—I—I—I am not uneasy.

Sir Bash. He's a true friend—He's uneasy on my account.

[*Aside.*

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, but you are uneasy!—and, my dear Sir Bashful, you repine at my success.

Sir Bash. Yes, sir, I do—I own it.

Sir Bril. Well, you're not disposed to be good company—I'll leave you.—Lovemore, where do you spend the evening?

Love. I can't say, sir ;—I believe I shall stay here,

Sir Bril. Nay, nay, if you are so snappish—I am glad to hear that, I am engaged to his wife. [*Aside.*] Is it not a rare present, Sir Bashful? [*Pulling him by the Sleeve.*] Thou dear pledge of love, let me lay thee close to my heart.

[*Exit SIR BRILLIANT, looking at the Case.*]

Sir Bash. What think ye now, Lovemore?

Love. All unaccountable to me, sir.

Sir Bash. Unaccountable!—"Tis too plain—my wife's a jade—a prostitute—a courtezan!

Love. I'm glad she has torn my letter, however.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Bash. By all that's false, I'm gulled, cheated, imposed upon, deceived, and dubbed—Ay, here her ladyship comes—And now she shall hear her own.

Love. 'Sdeath! let me fly the approaching storm—Sir Bashful, your humble servant, sir—I wish you a good night. [*Going.*]

Sir Bash. You must not go—you shan't leave me in this exigence—you shall be a witness of our separation.

Love. No, I can't bear the sight of her after what has pass'd—Good night—[*SIR BASHFUL holds him.*] Damnation! I must weather it! [*Aside.*]

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

Lady Con. I am surprised, Mr. Lovemore, that you will offer to stay a moment longer in this house!

Love. How the devil shall I give a turn to this affair? [*Aside.*]

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore is my friend, madam; and I desire he'll stay here as long as he pleases, madam.

Love. All must come out. [*Aside.*]

Lady Con. Your friend, Sir Bashful!—And do you authorize him to make sport of me, sir?—I wonder, Mr. Lovemore, you would think of sending me such

a letter!—Do you presume, sir, upon my having admitted a trifling act of civility from you?—Do you come disguised, sir, under a mask of friendship to undo me?

Love. It's a coming! [Aside.

Sir Bash. A mask of friendship!—I know Mr. Lovemore too well, and I desired him to send that letter.

Love. Sir Bashful desired me, madam.

Sir Bash. I desired him, madam.

Love. He desired me, madam.

Lady Con. What, to affront me, sir?

Sir Bash. There was not one word of truth in it.

Love. Not one word of truth, madam.

Sir Bash. It was all done to try you, madam; merely to know you a little or so.

Love. Merely to know you! pure innocent mirth.

Lady Con. And am I to be treated thus, sir; to be ever tormented by you?—And could you, Mr. Lovemore, be so unmanly as to make yourself an accomplice in so mean an attempt to ensnare me?

Sir Bash. To ensnare me!—She calls it ensnaring—It is pretty plain from all that has pass'd between us that our tempers are not fit for one another; and I now tell you that I am ready to part as soon as you please. Nay I will part.

Lady Con. That is the only thing we can agree in, sir.

Sir Bash. Had that letter come from another quarter, I know it would have been highly acceptable.

Lady Con. I disdain the imputation!

Sir Bash. I will vent no more reproaches—This is the last of our conversing together—And take this with you, by the way, you are not to believe one word of that letter—And as to any passion, that any body declares for you, there was no such thing—was there, Lovemore?

[Goes over to him.

Love. He states it all very right, madam.

Sir Bash. Let us laugh at her, Lovemore. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. Silly devil!—I can't help laughing at him.
[*Aside.*] Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Bash. Ha! ha! ha!—all a bam, madam!—ha! ha! nothing else in the world!—all to make sport of you. Ha! ha! ha!

Lady Con. I cannot bear this usage any longer—Two such brutes! Is my chair ready there?—You may depend, sir, this is the last you will see of me in your house. [Exit LADY CONSTANT.

Sir Bash. A bargain, madam, with all my heart!—Ha! ha! Lovemore, this was well managed.

Love. Charmingly managed, indeed!—I did not think you had so much spirit in you.

Sir Bash. I have found her out—I know her at last.—But, Mr. Lovemore, never own the letter; deny it to the last.

Love. You may depend upon me.

Sir Bash. I return you a thousand thanks.—A foolish woman, how she stands in her own light.

Love. Truly, I think she does.—Sir Bashful, I am mighty sorry I could not succeed better in this affair.

Sir Bash. And so am I.

Love. I have done my best, you see—and now I'll take my leave.

Sir Bash. Nay, stay a little longer.

Love. Had your lady proved tractable, I should not care how long I staid—but as things are situated, your humble servant, Sir Bashful.—Well off this bout—well off! [Aside.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, your servant; a good night to you.—But harkye, Mr. Lovemore; if I can serve you with your lady——

Love. I thank you as much as if you did,

Sir Bash. Be sure you deny every thing.—Fare you well.—[*Exit LOVEMORE.*] Sideboard, see the gentleman out.—He is a true friend indeed! I should have been undone but for him.—My Lady Constant! My Lady Constant!—Let me drive her from my thoughts.—Can I do it?—Rage, fury, love,—think no more of love—I never will own a tittle of that letter.—Odso! yonder it lies in fragments upon the ground—I'll pick them up this moment—keep them safe in my own custody—And, as to Sir Brilliant, I shall know how to proceed with madam in regard to him—I'll watch them both—if I can but get ocular demonstration of her guilt—If I can but get the means in my power, to prove to the whole world that she is vile enough to cuckold me, I shall be happy. [Exit.]

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. LOVEMORE'S.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, elegantly dressed; MUSLIN following her.

Mus. Why to be sure, ma'am; it is so for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

Mrs. Love. I fancy I am; I see the folly of my for-

mer conduct, and I am determined never to let my spirits sink into a melancholy state again.

Mus. Why, that's the very thing, ma'am; the very thing I have been always preaching up to you. Did not I always say, see company; Ma'am, take your share of pleasure, and never break your heart for any man. This is what I always said.

Mrs. Love. It's very well, you need not say any more now.

Mus. I always said so. And what did the world say? Heavens bless her for a sweet woman! and a plague go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, bloody murdering brute.

Mrs. Love. No more of these liberties, I desire.

Mus. Nay, don't be angry: they did say so indeed. But, dear heart, how every body will be overjoy'd, when they find you have pluck'd up a little! As for me, it gives me new life, to have so much company in the house, and such a racketing at the door with coaches and chairs, enough to hurry a body out of one's wits.—Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, ma'am, and that dress quite becomes you,—I suppose, ma'am, you will never wear your negligée again. It is not fit for you, indeed, ma'am.—It might pass very well with some folks, ma'am, but the like of you——

Mrs. Love. Pr'ythee truce with your tongue, and see who is coming up stairs.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR.

Mrs. Bellmour, I revive at the sight of you. Muslin, do you step down stairs, and do as I have ordered you.

Mus. What the deuce can she be at now? [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bell. You see I am punctual to my time.—Well, I admire your dress of all things. It's mighty pretty.

Mrs. Love. I am glad you like it. But, under all this appearance of gaiety, I have at the bottom but an aching heart.

Mrs. Bell. Be ruled by me, have courage, courage, and I'll answer for the event. Why, really, now you look just as you should do.—Why should you neglect so fine a figure?

Mrs. Love. You are so civil, Mrs. Bellmour!

Mrs. Bell. And so true too—What was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional ornaments of dress; and if you will but animate and inspire the whole by those graces of the mind, which I am sure you possess, the impression cannot fail of being effectual upon all beholders, and even upon the depraved mind of Mr. Lovemore.—You have not seen him since, have you?

Mrs. Love. No—not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. Bell. If he does but come home time enough, depend upon it my plot will take. Well, and have you got together a good deal of company?

Mrs. Love. Pretty well.

Mrs. Bell. That's right: show him that you will consult your own pleasure.—Is Sir Brilliant of the party?

Mrs. Love. Apropos, as soon as I came home I received a letter from him; He there urges his addresses with great warmth, begs to see me again, and has something particular to tell me—you shall see it.—O lud, I have not it about me!—I left it in my dressing-room, I believe; you shall see it by and by: I took your advice, and sent him word he might come. That lure brought him hither immediately: he makes no doubt of his success with me.

Mrs. Bell. Well! two such friends as Sir Brilliant and Mr. Lovemore, I believe, never existed!

Mrs. Love. Their falsehood to each other is unparalleled. I left Sir Brilliant at the whist table: as soon as the rubber is out, he'll certainly quit his company

in pursuit of me. Apropos—my Lady Constant is here.

Mrs. Bell. Is she?

Mrs. Love. She is, and has been making the strangest discovery: Mr. Lovemore has had a design there too!

Mrs. Bell. Lud a mercy! what would have become of the poor man, if he had succeeded with us all?

Mrs. Love. [*A Rap at the Door.*] As I live and breathe, I believe this is Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. If it is, every thing goes on swimmingly within.

Mrs. Love. I hear his voice; it is he! How my heart beats!

Mrs. Bell. Courage, and the day's your own. Where must I run?

Mrs. Love. In there, mā'am. Make haste; I hear his step on the stair-head.

Mrs. Bell. Success attend you. I am gone.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Love. I am frightened out of my senses. What the event may be I fear to think; but I must go through with it.

Enter LOVEMORE.

Mr. Lovemore, you are welcome home.

Love. Mrs. Lovemore, your servant.

[*Without looking at her.*

Mrs. Love. It is somewhat rare to see you at home so early.

Love. I said I wou'd come home, did not I? I always like to be as good as my word.—What could she mean by this usage? to make an appointment, and break it thus abruptly! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. He seems to muse upon it. [*Aside.*

Love. She does not mean to do so infamous a thing

as to jilt me? [*Aside.*] O, lord! I am wonderfully tired. [*Yawns, and sinks into an Arm chair.*]

Mrs. Love. You an't indisposed, I hope, my dear?

Love. No, my dear; I thank you, I am very well;—a little fatigued only, with jolting over the stones all the way from the city. I drank coffee with the old banker. I have been there ever since I saw you.—Confoundedly tired.—Where's William?

Mrs. Love. Do you want any thing?

Love. Only my slippers. I am not in spirits, I think. [*Yawns.*]

Mrs. Love. You never are in spirits at home, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I beg your pardon: I never am any where more cheerful. [*Stretching his Arms.*] I wish I may die if I an't very happy at home,——very [*Yawns.*] very happy!

Mrs. Love. I can hear otherwise. I am informed, that Mr. Lovemore is the inspirer of mirth and good humour wherever he goes.

Love. O! you overrate me; upon my soul you do.

Mrs. Love. I can hear, sir, that no person's company is so acceptable to the ladies; that 'tis your wit that inspirits every thing: that you have your compliment for one, your smile for another, a whisper for a third, and so on, sir: you divide your favours, and are every where, but at home, all whim, vivacity, and spirit.

Love. No! no! [*Laughing.*] how can you talk so? I swear I can't help laughing at the fancy. All whim, vivacity, and spirit! How can you banter so?—I divide my favours too!——O, Heavens! I can't stand this raillery: such a description of me!—I that am rather saturnine, of a serious cast, and inclined to be pensive! I can't help laughing at the oddity of the conceit.——O lord! O lord! [*Laughs.*]

Mrs. Love. Just as you please, sir. I see that I am ever to be treated with indifference.

[*Walks across the Stage.*

Love. [*Rises and walks the contrary Way.* I can't put this Widow Bellmour out of my head. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Love. If I had done any thing to provoke this usage, this cold insolent contempt— [*Walking.*

Love. I wish I had done with that business entirely; but my desires are kindled, and must be satisfied. [*Aside.*

[*They walk for some Time silently by each other.*

Mrs. Love. What part of my conduct gives you offence, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Still harping upon that ungrateful string?—but pr'ythee don't set me a laughing again.—Offence!—nothing gives me offence, child!—you know I am very fond—[*Yawns and walks.*]—I like you of all things, and think you a most admirable wife;—prudent, managing,—careless of your own person, and very attentive of mine;—not much addicted to pleasure,—grave, retired, and domestic; govern your house, pay the tradesmen's bills, [*Yawns.*] scold the servants, and love your husband:—upon my soul, a very good wife!—as good a sort of a wife [*Yawns.*] as a body might wish to have.—Where's William?—I must go to bed.

Mrs. Love. To bed so early! Had not you better join the company?

Love. I shan't go out to-night.

Mrs. Love. But I mean the company in the drawing-room.

Love. What company? [*Stares at her.*

Mrs. Love. That I invited to a rout.

Love. A rout in my house!—and you dressed out too!—What is all this?

Mrs. Love. You have no objection, I hope.

Love. Objection!—No, I like company, you know,

of all things; I'll go and join them: who are they all?

Mrs. Love. You know them all; and there's your friend, Sir Brilliant, there.

Love. Is he there? I'm glad of it. But, pray now, how comes this about?

Mrs. Love. I intend to do it often.

Love. Do you?

Mrs. Love. Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel luxuriously in a course of pleasure. I shall pursue my own plan of diversion.

Love. Do so, do so, ma'am: the change in your temper will be very pleasing.

Mrs. Love. I shall, indeed, sir. I'm in earnest.

Love. By all means follow your own inclinations.

Mrs. Love. And so I shall, sir, I assure you.

[Sings.

Love. What the devil is the matter with her? And what in the name of wonder does all this mean?

Mrs. Love. Mean, sir!—It means—it means—it means—it means—how can you ask me what it means?—Well, to be sure, the sobriety of that question!—Do you think a woman of spirit can have leisure to tell her meaning, when she is all air, alertness, pleasure, and enjoyment.

Love. She is mad!—Stark mad!

Mrs. Love. You're mistaken, sir,—not mad, but in spirits, that's all. No offence, I hope—Am I too flighty for you?—Perhaps I am: you are of a saturnine disposition, inclined to think a little or so. Well, don't let me interrupt you: don't let me be of any inconvenience. That would be the unpolitest thing; for a married couple to interfere and encroach on each other's pleasures! O hideous! it would be gothic to the last degree. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. [Forcing a Laugh.] Ha! ha!—Ma'am, you—ha! ha! you are perfectly right.

Mrs. Love. Nay, but I don't like that laugh now;

I positively don't like it. Can't you laugh out as you were used to do? For my part, I'm determined to do nothing else all the rest of my life.

Love. This is the most astonishing thing! Ma'am, I don't rightly comprehend——

Mrs. Love. Oh lud! oh lud!—with that important face! Well, but come, now; what don't you comprehend?

Love. There is something in this treatment that I don't so well—

Mrs. Love. Oh are you there, sir! How quickly they, who have no sensibility for the peace and happiness of others, can feel for themselves, Mr. Lovemore!—But that's a grave reflection, and I hate reflection.

Love. What has she got into her head? This sudden change, Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, is a little alarming, and——

Mrs. Love. Nay, don't be frightened; there is no harm in innocent mirth, I hope? Never look so grave upon it. I assure you, sir, that though, on your part, you seem determined to offer constant indignities to your wife, and though the laws of retaliation would in some sort exculpate her, if, when provoked to the utmost, exasperated beyond all enduring, she should, in her turn, make him know what it is to receive an injury in the tenderest point——

Love. Madam!

[*Angrily.*

Mrs. Love. Well, well, don't be frightened. I say, I sha'n't retaliate: my own honour will secure you there, you may depend upon it.—You won't come and play a game at cards? Well, do as you like; well, you won't come? No, no, I see you won't.—What say you to a bit of supper with us?—Nor that neither?—Follow your inclinations: it is not material where a body eats:—the company expects me; Your servant, Mr. Lovemore, yours, yours.

[*Exit—singing.*

Love. This is a frolic I never saw her in before!—

Laugh all the rest of my life!—laws of retaliation!—an injury in the tenderest point!—the company expects me,—Your servant, my dear!—yours, yours! [*Mimicking her.*] What the devil is all this? Some of her female friends have been tampering with her. Zounds, I must begin to look a little sharp after the lady. I'll go this moment into the card room, and watch whom she whispers with, whom she ogles with, and every circumstance that can lead to— [*Going.*]

Enter MUSLIN in a Hurry.

Mus. Madam, madam,—here's your letter; I would not for all the world that my master—

Love. What, is she mad too? What's the matter, woman?

Mus. Nothing, sir,—nothing: I wanted a word with my lady, that's all, sir.

Love. You would not for the world that your master—What was you going to say?—what paper's that!

Mus. Paper, sir!

Love. Paper, sir! Let me see it.

Mus. Lard, sir! how can you ask a body for such a thing? It's a letter to me, sir, a letter from the country—a letter from my sister, sir. She bids me to buy her a *shiver de fize* cap, and a sixteenth in the lottery; and tells me of a number she dreamt of, that's all, sir: I'll put it up.

Love. Let me look at it. Give it me this moment. [*Reads.*] *To Mrs. Lovemore!—Brilliant Fashion.* This is a letter from the country, is it?

Mus. That, sir—that is—no, sir,—no;—that's not sister's letter.—If you will give me that back, sir, I'll show you the right one.

Love. Where did you get this?

Mus. Sir?

Love. Where did you get it?—Tell me truth—

Mus. Dear heart, you fright a body so—in the parlour, sir—I found it there.

Love. Very well !—leave the room.

Mus. The devil fetch it, I was never so out in my politics in all my days. [Exit.

Love. A pretty epistle truly this seems to be—Let me read it.

[Reads.] *Permit me, dear madam, to throw myself on my knees, for on my knees I must address you, and in that humble posture, to implore your compassion.—Compassion with a vengeance on him—Think you see me now with tender, melting, supplicating eyes, languishing at your feet.—Very well, sir.—Can you find it in your heart to persist in cruelty?—Grant me but access to you once more, and in addition to what I already said this morning I will urge such motives—Urge motives, will ye?—as will suggest to you, that you should no longer hesitate in gratitude to reward him, who still on his knees, here makes a vow to you of eternal constancy and love.* BRILLIANT FASHION.

So ! so ! so ! your very humble servant, Sir Brilliant Fashion !—This is your friendship for me, is it ?—You are mighty kind, indeed, sir,—but I thank you as much as if you had really done me the favour : and Mrs. Lovemore, I'm your humble servant too. She intends to laugh all the rest of her life ! This letter will change her note. Yonder she comes along the gallery, and Sir Brilliant in full chase of her. They come this way. Could I but detect them both now ! I'll step aside ; and who knows but the devil may tempt them to their undoing. At least I'll try. A polite husband I am : there's the coast clear for you, madam. [Exit.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE and SIR BRILLIANT.

Mrs. Love. I tell you, Sir Brilliant, your civility is odious ; your compliments fulsome, and your solicitations impertinent, sir.—I must make use of harsh language, sir : you provoke it, and I can't refrain.

Sir Bril. Not retiring to solitude and discontent again, I hope, madam! Have a care, my dear Mrs. Lovemore, of a relapse.

Mrs. Love. No danger of that, sir: don't be so solicitous about me. Why would you leave the company! Let me entreat you to return, sir.

Sir Bril. By Heaven, there is more rapture in being one moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the company of a whole drawing-room of beauties. Round you are melting pleasures, tender transports, youthful loves, and blooming graces, all unfelt, neglected, and despised, by a tasteless, cold, languid, unimpassioned husband, while they might be all so much better employed to the purposes of ecstasy and bliss.

Mrs. Love. I desire, Sir Brilliant, you will desist from this unequalled insolence. I am not to be treated in this manner;—and I assure you, sir, that were I not afraid of the ill consequences that might follow, I should not hesitate a moment to acquaint Mr. Lovemore with your whole behaviour.

Sir Bril. She won't tell her husband then!—A charming creature, and blessings on her for so convenient a hint. She yields, by all that's wicked; what shall I say to overwhelm her senses in a flood of nonsense? [Aside.]

Go, my heart's envoys, tender sighs, make haste,—
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,—
Raptures and paradise—
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd.

[Forcing her all this Time.]

Enter MR. LOVEMORE.

Love. Zoons, this is too much.

Sir Bril. [Kneels down to buckle his Shoe.] This confounded buckle is always plaguing me. My dear boy, Lovemore! I rejoice to see thee.

[They stand looking at each other.]

Love. And have you the confidence to look me in the face?

Sir Bril. I was telling your lady, here, of the most whimsical adventure——

Love. Don't add the meanness of falsehood to the black attempt of invading the happiness of your friend. I did imagine, sir, from the long intercourse that has subsisted between us, that you might have had delicacy enough, feeling enough, honour enough, sir, not to meditate an injury like this.

Sir Bril. Ay, it's all over, I am detected! [*Aside.*] Mr. Lovemore, if begging your pardon for this rashness will any ways atone——

Love. No, sir, nothing can atone. The provocation you have given me would justify my drawing upon you this instant, did not that lady and this roof protect you.

Sir Bril. But, Mr. Lovemore——

Love. But, sir,——

Sir Bril. I only beg——

Love. Pray, sir,—Sir, I insist; I won't hear a word.

Sir Bril. I declare, upon my honour——

Love. Honour! for shame, Sir Brilliant, don't mention the word.

Sir Bril. If begging pardon of that lady——

Love. That lady!—I desire you will never speak to that lady.

Sir Bril. Nay, but pr'ythee, Lovemore——

Love. Po! po! don't tell me, sir——

[*Walks about in Anger.*]

Enter SIR BASHFUL.

Sir Bash. Did not I hear loud words among you? I certainly did. What are you quarrelling about?

Love. Read that, Sir Bashful. [*Gives him SIR BRILLIANT'S Letter.*] Read that, and judge if I have not cause——

[*SIR BASHFUL reads to himself.*]

Sir Bril. Hear but what I have to say——

Love. No, sir, no ; I have done with you for the present.—As for you, madam, I am satisfied with your conduct—I was indeed a little alarmed, but I have been a witness of your behaviour, and I am above harbouring low suspicions.

Sir Bash. Upon my word, Mr. Lovemore, this is carrying the jest too far.

Love. Sir !—It is the basest action a gentleman can be guilty of!

Sir Bash. Why so I think. Sir Brilliant, [*Aside.*] here, take this letter, and read it to him ; his own letter to my wife.

Sir Bril. Let me have it. [*Takes the Letter.*

Sir Bash. 'Tis indeed, as you say, the worst thing a gentleman can be guilty of.

Love. 'Tis an unparalleled breach of friendship.

Sir Bril. Well, I can't see any thing unparalleled in it : I believe it will not be found to be without a precedent—as for example— [*Reads.*

To my LADY CONSTANT——

Why should I conceal, my dear madam, that your charms have touched my heart ?

Love. Zoons ! my letter— [*Aside.*

Sir Bril. [*Reading.*] *I long have loved you, long adored. Could I but flatter myself—*

Sir Bash. The basest thing a man can be guilty of, Mr. Lovemore !

Love. All a forgery, sir ; all a forgery.

[*Snatches the Letter.*

Sir Bash. That I deny ; it is the very identical letter my lady threw away with such indignation.—My Lady Constant, how have I wronged you !—That was the cause of your taking it so much to heart, Mr. Lovemore, was it ?

Love. A mere contrivance to palliate his guilt. Po ! Po ! I won't stay a moment longer among ye. I'll go into another room to avoid ye all. [*Opens the Door.*] Hell and destruction !——what fiend is con-

jured up here? Zoons! let me make my escape out of the house. [*Runs to the opposite Door.*]

Mrs. Love. I'll secure this door; you must not go, my dear.

Love. 'Sdeath, madam, let me pass!

Mrs. Love. Nay, you shall stay: I want to introduce an acquaintance of mine to you.

Love. I desire, madam—

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR.

Mrs. Bell. My lord, my Lord Etheridge; I am heartily glad to see your lordship.

[*Taking hold of him.*]

Mrs. Love. Do, my dear, let me introduce this lady to you. [*Turning him to her.*]

Love. Here's the devil and all to do! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Bell. My lord, this is the most fortunate encounter—

Love. I wish I was fifty miles off. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Love. Mrs. Bellmour, give me leave to introduce Mr. Lovemore to you. [*Turning him to her.*]

Mrs. Bell. No, my dear ma'am, let me introduce Lord Etheridge to you. [*Pulling him.*] My lord—

Sir Bril. In the name of wonder, what is all this?

Sir Bash. Wounds! is this another of his intrigues blown up?

Mrs. Love. My dear ma'am, you are mistaken: this is my husband.

Mrs. Bell. Pardon me, ma'am, 'tis my Lord Etheridge.

Mrs. Love. My dear, how can you be so ill-bred in your own house?—Mrs. Bellmour,—this is Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Are you going to toss me in a blanket, madam?—call up the rest of your people, if you are.

Mrs. Bell. Pshaw! pr'ythee now, my lord, leave off your humours. Mrs. Lovemore, this is my Lord Etheridge, a lover of mine, who has made proposals

of marriage to me. Come, come, you shall have a wife: I will take compassion on you.

Love. Damnation! I can't stand it. [Aside.]

Mrs. Bell. Come, cheer up, my lord: what the deuce, your dress is altered! what's become of the star and ribband? And so the gay, the florid, the magnifique Lord Etheridge dwindles down into plain Mr. Lovemore, the married man! Mr. Lovemore, your most obedient, very humble servant, sir.

Love. I can't bear to feel myself in so ridiculous a circumstance. [Aside.]

Sir Bash. He has been passing himself for a lord, has he?

Mrs. Bell. I beg my compliments to your friend Mrs. Loveit: I am much obliged to you both for your very honourable designs. [Courtesying to him.]

Love. I was never so ashamed in all my life!

Sir Bril. So, so, so, all his pains were to hide the star from me. This discovery is a perfect cordial to my dejected spirits.

Mrs. Bell. Mrs. Lovemore, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the providence that directed you to pay me a visit, and I shall henceforth consider you as my deliverer.

Love. Zoons! It was she that fainted away in the closet, and be damn'd to her jealousy. [Aside.]

Sir Bril. My lord, [Advances to him.] My lord, my Lord Etheridge, as the man says in the play, "Your lordship's right welcome back to Denmark."

Love. Now he comes upon me.—O! I'm in a fine situation! [Aside.]

Sir Bril. My lord, I hope that ugly pain in your lordship's side is abated.

Love. Absurd, and ridiculous. [Aside.]

Sir Bril. There is nothing forming there, I hope, my lord.

Love. Damnation! I can't bear all this—I won't stay to be teased by any of you—I'll go to the com-

pany in the card-room! [*Goes to the Door in the back Scene.*] Here is another fiend! I am beset with them.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

No way for an escape?—

[*Attempts both Stage Doors, and is prevented.*]

Lady Con. I have lost every rubber I play'd for—quite broke. Do, Mr. Lovemore, lend me another hundred.

Love. I would give a hundred you were all in Nova Scotia.

Lady Con. Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, you are married to the falsest man;—he has deceived me strangely.

Mrs. Love. I begin to feel for him, and to pity his uneasiness.

Mrs. Bell. Never talk of pity; let him be probed to the quick.

Sir Bash. The case is pretty plain, I think now, Sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. Pretty plain, upon my soul—Ha! ha!

Love. I'll turn the tables upon Sir Bashful, for all this—[*Takes SIR BASHFUL'S Letter out of his Pocket.*] Where is the mighty harm now, in this letter?

Sir Bash. Where is the harm?—Ha! ha! ha!

Love. [*Reads.*] *I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold—*

Sir Bash. Shame and confusion! I am undone.

[*Aside.*]

Love. Hear this, Sir Bashful—*I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold the manifold vexations, of which, through a false prejudice, I am myself the occasion—*

Sir Bash. 'Sdeath! I'll hear no more of it.

[*Snatches at the Letter.*]

Love. No, sir; I resign it here, where it was directed.

Lady Con. For Heaven's sake, let us see—It is his hand, sure enough!

Love. Yes, madam, and those are his sentiments.

Sir Bash. I can't look any body in the face.

All. Ha! ha!——

Sir Bril. So, so, so! he has been in love with his wife all this time, has he? Sir Bashful, will you go and see the new comedy with me? Lovemore, pray now don't you think it a base thing to invade the happiness of a friend? or to do him a clandestine wrong? or to injure him with the woman he loves?

Love. To cut the matter short with you, sir, we are both villains.

Sir Bril. Villains!

Love. Ay, both! we are pretty fellows indeed!

Mrs. Bell. I am glad to find you are awakened to a sense of your error.

Love. I am, madam, and am frank enough to own it. I am above attempting to disguise my feelings, when I am conscious they are on the side of truth and honour. With sincere remorse I ask your pardon—I should ask pardon of my Lady Constant too, but the truth is, Sir Bashful threw the whole affair in my way; and, when a husband will be ashamed of loving a valuable woman, he must not be surprised, if other people take her case into consideration, and love her for him.

Sir Bril. Why, faith, that does in some sort apologize for him.

Sir Bash. Sir Bashful! Sir Bashful! thou art ruined! [Aside.

Mrs. Bell. Well, sir, upon certain terms, I don't know but I may sign and seal your pardon.

Love. Terms!—what terms?

Mrs. Bell. That you make due expiation of your guilt to that lady. [Pointing to MRS. LOVEMORE.

Love. That lady, ma'am!—That lady has no reason to complain.

Mrs. Love. No reason to complain, Mr. Love-more?

Love. No, madam, none; for whatever may have been my imprudences, they have had their source in your conduct.

Mrs. Love. In my conduct, sir!

Love. In your conduct:—I here declare before this company, and I am above palliating the matter! I here declare, that no man in England could be better inclined to domestic happiness, if you, madam, on your part, had been willing to make home agreeable.

Mrs. Love. There, I confess, he touches me.

[*Aside.*

Love. You could take pains enough before marriage; you could put forth all your charms; practise all your arts; for ever changing; running an eternal round of variety, to win my affections; but when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping; never dressed, pensive, silent, melancholy; and the only entertainment in my house was the dear pleasure of a dull conjugal tete-a-tete; and all this insipidity, because you think the sole merit of a wife consists in her virtue: a fine way of amusing a husband, truly!

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, and so it is— [*Laughing.*

Mrs. Love. Sir, I must own there is too much truth in what you say. This lady has opened my eyes, and convinced me there was a mistake in my former conduct.

Love. Come, come, you need say no more. I forgive you: I forgive.

Mrs. Love. Forgive! I like that air of confidence, when you know, that, on my side, it is, at worst, an error in judgment; whereas, on yours——

Mrs. Bell. Po! po! never stand disputing: you know each other's faults and virtues: you have nothing to do but to mend the former, and enjoy the latter. There, there, kiss and be friends. There,

Mrs. Lovemore, take your reclaimed libertine to your arms.

Love. 'Tis in your power, madam, to make a reclaimed libertine of me indeed.

Mrs. Love. From this moment it shall be our mutual study to please each other.

Love. A match with all my heart. I shall hereafter be ashamed only of my follies, but never shall be ashamed of owning that I sincerely love you.

Sir Bash. Shan't you be ashamed?

Love. Never, sir.

Sir Bash. And will you keep me in countenance?

Love. I will.

Sir Bash. Give me your hand. I now forgive you all, from the bottom of my heart. My Lady Constant, I own the letter, I own the sentiments of it; [*Embraces her.*] and from this moment I take you to my heart. —Lovemore, zookers! you have made a man of me!

Sir Bril. And now, Mr. Lovemore, may I presume to hope for pardon at that lady's hands?

[*Points to MRS. LOVEMORE.*]

Love. My dear confederate in vice, your pardon is granted. Two sad dogs we have been. But come, give us your hand: we have used each other damnably—for the future, we will endeavour to make each other amends.

Sir Bril. And so we will.

Love. And now I heartily congratulate the whole company that this business has had so happy a tendency to convince each of us of our folly.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, sir, don't draw me into a share of your folly.

Love. Come, come, my dear ma'am, you are not without your share of it. This will teach you for the future to be content with one lover at a time, without listening to a fellow you know nothing of, because he assumes a title, and reports well of himself.

Mrs. Bell. The reproof is just, I grant it.

Love. Come, let us join the company cheerfully, keep our own secrets, and not make ourselves the town talk.

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, let us keep the secret.

Love. What, returning to your fears again?

Sir Bash. I have done.

Love. Though, faith, if this business were known in the world, it might prove a very useful lesson: the men would see how their passions may carry them into the danger of wounding the bosom of a friend: the ladies would learn, that, after the marriage rites, they should not suffer their powers of pleasing to languish away, but should still remember to sacrifice to the Graces.

To win a man, when all your pains succeed,
THE WAY TO KEEP HIM is a task indeed.

Exeunt.

THE END.

...the way to know him...

...the way to know him...

...the way to know him...

...the way to know him...

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ALL IN THE WRONG



SIR, J. RESTLESS . . . AND YET SHE LOOKS BEAUTIFUL
STILL .

ACT. I.

SCENE. I.

PAINTED BY SINGLETON.

PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN & CO.

ENGRAVED BY ENGLERBART

ALL IN THE WRONG;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

REMARKS.

The author of this excellent comedy was a man of learning, whose propensity to the drama ruined his better prospects. He was called to the bar by the Society of Lincoln's Inn, but practised the law with so little fervency, compared to the ardour with which he pursued dramatic writing, that, when this prevailing taste subsided, and he could no longer excite his Muse to her wonted labour, he found himself suddenly reduced to a state of poverty, which no after discretion could counteract.

Mr. Murphy's dramatic works are numerous, but they were produced at a period when an author's profits were but small; and though he had no vices to plunge him into indigence, he was habituated to the domestic conveniencies of a gentleman, and he had not strength of mind to yield up the ease and elegance, which affluence alone should bestow, for the content and pride of freedom and independence. But to reproach the present author with a weakness, common to men of letters as well as to the illiterate, would be treating him harshly, according to the rules of custom, though with perfect justice, according to the principles of honour and fortitude.

Amongst his number of dramatic productions, the present play of "All in the Wrong" ranks as one of

the best. In his Prologue, or Preface, he acknowledges himself indebted to Moliere for some of his scenes. Moliere's genius has been of use to many of our comic dramatists, who, at the time Mr. Murphy wrote, enriched their works with his wit and humour, without calling themselves translators, but merely occasional debtors to his primary invention.

It would be much advantage to English authors of the present time, to have such a resource in a neighbouring nation now. Still, it requires no mean talent to dispose of borrowed goods to the advantage of the wearer; and when an incident is formed to ornament one drama, it is difficult to make it fit so nicely as to be an adornment to another.

The dialogue of "All in the Wrong" is of a species so natural, that it never in one sentence soars above the proper standard of elegant life; and the incidents that occur are bold without extravagance or apparent artifice, which is the criterion on which judgment should be formed between comedy and farce.

The last scene in the fourth act is an illustration of this position—its effect is comic to the highest degree, yet having arisen from causes consonant with the general events of life, no particle of burlesque infringes on the rational enjoyment, which an enlightened audience receives from the whimsical coincidence of unlooked-for accidents. A veil should now be substituted in this scene, for that old-fashioned appendage to disguise, a mask.

It was a hardy enterprize of the author to attempt the delineation of six jealous characters in the self-

same play; but difficult as the task was, he has succeeded in making an excellent comedy, though not six excellent parts. Clarissa and Young Bellmont are but faint shadows of the other four characters; and Beverley and Belinda are, in dramatic substance, greatly inferior to Sir John and Lady Restless.

When the powers of invention forsook Mr. Murphy,—with great credit to his sober judgment and remaining abilities,—he became the translator of Tacitus. When all exertion of a writer was fled, Lord Loughborough, his former acquaintance, and then Chancellor of England, gave him a place as Commissioner of Bankrupts;—and, when the infirmity of age bereft him of bodily force to act in this capacity, the King, in his gracious benevolence, allowed him an annuity of three hundred a year, which snatched him from bitter penury, and retarded, whilst it smoothed, his passage to the grave.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JOHN RESTLESS

BEVERLEY

SIR WILLIAM BELLMONT

BELLMONT

BLANDFORD

ROBERT

BRUSH

Mr Wroughton.

Mr. Elliston.

Mr. Wewitzer.

Mr. Holland.

Mr. Dormer.

Mr. Maddocks.

Mr. Purser.

LADY RESTLESS

BELINDA

CLARISSA

TATTLE

TIPPETT

MARMALET

Miss De Camp.

Mrs. Jordan.

Miss Boyce.

Mrs. Dormer.

Miss Tidswell.

Mrs. Scott.

ALL IN THE WRONG.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The Park.

Enter SIR JOHN RESTLESS and ROBERT, from a House in the Side Scene.

Sir John. Sir John Restless! Sir John Restless! thou hast played the fool with a vengeance. What devil whispered thee to marry such a woman?—Robert, you have been a faithful servant, and I value you. Did your lady go out at this door here into the Park, or did she go out at the street door?

Rob. This door, sir.

Sir John. Robert, I will never live in a house again that has two doors to it.

Rob. Sir!

Sir John. I will give warning to my landlord instantly. The eyes of Argus are not sufficient to watch the motions of a wife, where there is a street door, and a back door, to favour her escapes.

Rob. Upon my word, sir, I wish—you will pardon my boldness, sir,—I wish you would shake off this uneasiness that preys upon your spirits. It grieves me to the heart,—it does, indeed, sir, to see you in this

way: banish your suspicions: you have conceived some strange aversion, I am afraid, to my lady, sir.

Sir John. No, Robert; no aversion; in spite of me, I doat upon her still.

Rob. Then why will you not think generously, sir, of the person you love? My lady, I dare be sworn—

Sir John. Is false to me. That embitters my whole life. I love her, and she repays me with ingratitude, with perfidy, with falsehood, with——

Rob. I dare be sworn, sir, she is a woman of honour.

Sir John. Robert, I have considered you as a friend in my house: don't you betray me too: don't attempt to justify her.

Rob. Dear sir, if you will but give me leave: you have been an indulgent master to me, and I am only concerned for your welfare. You married my lady for love.

Sir John. Yes, I married her for love. When first I saw her, I was not so much struck with her beauty, as with that air of an ingenuous mind that appeared in her countenance; her features did not so much charm me with their symmetry, as that expression of sweetness, that smile that indicated affability, modesty, and compliance. But, honest Robert, I was deceived: I was not a month married, when I saw her practising those very smiles at her glass: I was alarmed; I resolved to watch her from that moment, and I have seen such things!

Rob. Upon my word, sir, I believe you wrong her, and wrong yourself: you build on groundless surmises; you make yourself unhappy, and my lady too; and by being constantly uneasy, and never showing her the least love,—you'll forgive me, sir,—you fill her mind with strange suspicions, and so the mischief is done.

Sir John. Suspicions, Robert?

Rob. Yes, sir, strange suspicions!—My lady find

herself treated with no degree of tenderness; she infers that your inclinations are fixed elsewhere, and so she is become—you will pardon my blunt honesty—she is become downright jealous,—as jealous as yourself, sir.

Sir John. Oh! Robert, you cannot see, that all her pretences to suspect me of infidelity are merely a counterplot to cover her own loose designs; it is but a gauze covering, though; it is seen through, and only serves to show her guilt the more.

Rob. Upon my word, Sir John, I cannot see——

Sir John. No, Robert; I know you can't, but I can. Her suspicions of me all make against her; they are female stratagems, and yet it is but too true that she still is near my heart. Oh! Robert, Robert, when I have watched her at a play, or elsewhere; when I have counted her oglings, and her whisperings, her stolen glances, and her artful leer, with the cunning of her sex, she has pretended to be as watchful of me: dissembling, false, deceitful woman!

Rob. And yet, I dare assure you——

Sir John. No more; I am not to be deceived; I know her thoroughly, and now—now—has not she escaped out of my house, even now?

Rob. But with no bad design.

Sir John. I am the best judge of that: which way did she go?

Rob. Across the Park, sir; that way, towards the Horse Guards.

Sir John. Towards the Horse Guards!——there,—there,—there, the thing is evident: you may go in, Robert.

Rob. Indeed, sir, I——

Sir John. Go in, I say; go in.

Rob. There is no persuading him to his own good.
[Exit.

Sir John. Gone towards the Horse Guards! my head aches; my forehead burns; I am cutting my horns. Gone towards the Horse Guards!—I'll pursue her thither; if I find her, the time, the place, all will inform against her. *Sir John!* *Sir John!* you were a madman to marry such a woman. [*Exit.*

Enter BEVERLEY and BELLMONT, at opposite Sides.

Bev. Ha! my dear Bellmont! A fellow sufferer in love is a companion well met.

Bell. Beverl-y! I rejoice to see you.

Bev. Well! I suppose the same cause has brought us both into the Park: both come to sigh our amorous vows in the friendly gloom of yonder walk. Belinda keeps a perpetual war of love and grief, and hope and fear, in my heart: and, let me see—[*Lays his Hand on BELLMONT's Breast.*—how fares all here? I fancy my sister is a little busy with you.

Bell. Busy! she makes a perfect riot there. Not one wink the whole night. Oh! Clarissa, her form so animated! her eyes so—

Bev. Pr'ythee, truce; I have not leisure to attend to her praise; a sister's praise too! the greatest merit I ever could see in Clarissa is, that she loves you freely and sincerely.

Bell. And to be even with you, sir, your Belinda, upon my soul, notwithstanding all your lavish praises, her highest perfection, in my mind, is her sensibility to the merit of my friend.

Bev. Oh, Bellmont! such a girl!

Scarce can I to Heav'n excuse

The devotion which I use

Unto that adored dame!

But tell me honestly, now; do you think she has ever betrayed the least regard for me?

Bell. How can you, who have such convincing

proofs, how can you ask such a question? That uneasiness of yours, that inquietude of mind——

Bev. Pr'ythee, don't fix that character upon me.

Bell. It is your character, my dear Beverley: instead of enjoying the object before you, you are ever looking back to something past, or conjecturing about something to come, and are your own self-tormentor.

Bev. No, no, no; don't be so severe: I hate the very notion of such a temper: the thing is, when a man loves tenderly, as I do, solicitude and anxiety are natural; and when Belinda's father opposes my warmest wishes——

Bell. Why, yes, the good Mr. Blandford is willing to give her in marriage to me.

Bev. The senseless old dotard!

Bell. Thank you for the compliment! and my father, the wise Sir William Bellmont——

Bev. Is a tyrannical, positive, headstrong——

Bell. There again I thank you. But, in short, the old couple, Belinda's father and mine, have both agreed upon the match. They insist upon compliance from their children; so that, according to their wise heads, I am to be married off-hand to Belinda, and you and your sister, poor Clarissa, are to be left to shift for yourselves.

Bev. Racks and torments!

Bell. Racks and torments!—Seas of milk and ships of amber, man!—We are sailing to our wished-for harbour, in spite of their machinations. I have settled the whole affair with Clarissa.

Bev. Have you?

Bell. I have; and to-morrow morning makes me possessor of her charms.

Bev. My dear boy, give us your hand: and then, thou dear rogue, and then Belinda's mine! Loll-toll loll——

Bell. Well may you be in raptures, sir ; for here, here, here, they both come.

Enter BELINDA and CLARISSA.

Bev. Grace was in all her steps ; Heav'n in her eye ;

In every gesture dignity and love.—

Belin. A poetical reception truly !—But can't your passion inspire you to a composition of your own, Mr. Beverley ?

Bev. It inspires me with sentiments, madam, which I can't find words to express. Suckling, Waller, Lansdown, and all our dealers in love verses, give but a faint image of a heart touched like mine.

Belin. Poor gentleman ! what a terrible taking you are in ! But if the sonneteers cannot give an image of you, sir, have you had recourse to a painter, as you promised me ?

Bev. I have, Belinda, and here,——here is the humble portrait of your adorer.

Belin. [*Taking the Picture.*] Well ! there is a likeness ; but, after all, there is a better painter than this gentleman, whoever he be.

Bev. A better !——now she is discontented. [*Aside.*] Where, madam, can a better be found ?——If money can purchase him——

Belin. Oh ! sir, when he draws for money he never succeeds. But when pure inclination prompts him, then his colouring is warm indeed. He gives a portrait that endears the original.

Bev. Such an artist is worth the Indies !

Belin. You need not go so far to seek him : he has done your business already. The limner I mean is a certain little blind god, called Love, and he has stamped such an impression of you here——

Bev. Madam, your most obedient ; and I can tell

you, that the very same gentleman has been at work for you too.—

Bell. [*Who had been talking apart with CLARISSA.*] Oh! he has had a world of business upon his hands, for we too have been agreeing what havoc he has made with us.

Clar. Yes, but we are but in a kind of fool's paradise here: all our schemes are but mere castle-building, which your father, Mr. Bellmont, and, my dear Belinda,—yours too are most obstinately determined to destroy.

Bell. Why, as you say, they are determined that I shall have the honour of Belinda's hand in the country dance of matrimony.

Belin. Without considering that I may like another partner better.

Bev. And without considering that I, forlorn as I am, and my sister, there—who is as well inclined to a matrimonial game of romps as any girl in Christendom, must both of us sit down, and bind our brows with willow, in spite of our strongest inclinations to mingle in the groupe.

Bell. But we have planned our own happiness, and, with a little resolution, we shall be successful in the end, I warrant you. Clarissa, let us take a turn this way, and leave that love-sick pair to themselves: they are only fit company for each other, and we may find wherewithal to entertain ourselves.

Clar. Let us try: turn this way.

Belin. Are you going to leave us Clarissa?

Clar. Only just sauntering into the side-walk: we shan't lose one another.

Belin. You are such a tender couple! you are not tired, I see, of saying pretty soft things to each other. Well! well! take your own way.

Clar. And if I guess right, you are glad to be left together.

Belin. Who I?

Clar. Yes, you; the coy Belinda!

Belin. Not I, truly: let us walk together.

Clar. No, no, by no means: you shall be indulged. Adieu!—we shall be within call.

[*Exeunt BELLMONT and CLARISSA.*]

Bev. My sister is generously in love with Bellmont: I wish Belinda would act as openly towards me.

[*Aside.*]

Belin. Well, sir!--Thoughtful! I'll call Mr. Bellmont back, if that's the case.

Bev. She will call him back.

[*Aside.*]

Belin. Am I to entertain you, or you me?

Bev. Madam!

Belin. Madam!--ha, ha!--Why you look as if you were frightened: Are you afraid of being left alone with me?

Bev. O, Belinda, you know that is the happiness of my life;—but——

Belin. But what, sir?

Bev. Have I done any thing to offend you?

Belin. To offend me?

Bev. I should have been of the party last night; I own I should; it was a sufficient inducement to me that you was to be there; it was my fault and you I see are piqued at it.

Belin. I piqued!

Bev. I see you are; and the company perceived it last night. I have heard it all: in mere resentment you directed all your discourse to Mr. Bellmont.

Belin. If I did, it was merely accidental.

Bev. No, it was deliberately done: forgive my rash folly in refusing the invitation; I meant no manner of harm.

Belin. Who imagines you did, sir?——

Bev. I beg your pardon, Belinda; you take offence too lightly.

Belin. Ha, ha!--what have you taken into your head now?—This uneasiness is of your own making.

—Upon my word, sir, whoever is your author, you are misinformed. You alarm me with these fancies, and you know I have often told you that you are of too refining a temper: you create for yourself imaginary misunderstandings, and then are ever entering into explanations. But this watching for intelligence from the spies and misrepresenters of conversation, betrays strong symptoms of jealousy. I would not be married to a jealous man for the world.

Ber. Now she's seeking occasion to break off.—
[*Aside.*] Jealousy, ma'am, can never get admission into my breast. I am of too generous a temper: a certain delicacy I own I have; I value the opinion of my friends, and when there are circumstances of a doubtful aspect, I am glad to set things in their true light. And if I do so with others, surely with you, on whom my happiness depends, to desire a favourable interpretation of my words and actions cannot be improper.

Belin. But these little humours may grow up, and gather into the fixed disease of jealousy at last.

LADY RESTLESS—*crosses the Stage, and rings a Bell at the Door.*

And——There now, there goes a lady, who is a victim to her own fretful imagination.

Ber. Who is the lady, pray?—

Belin. My Lady Restless. Walk this way, and I will give you her whole character. I am not acquainted with her ladyship, but I have heard much of her. This way. [*Exeunt BELINDA and BEVERLEY.*

Lady R. [*Ringing at the Door.*] What do these servants mean?—There is something going forward here. I will be let in, or I will know the reason why. [*Rings again.*] But in the mean time, Sir John can let any body he pleases out at the street door: I'll run up the steps here, and observe. [*Exit.*

TATTLE opens the Door, MARMALET follows her.

Tat. Who rung this bell?—I don't see any body;—and yet I am sure the bell rung.—Well, Mrs. Marmalet, you will be going, I see.

Mar. Yes, Mrs. Tattle, I am obliged to leave you. I'll step across the Park, and shall soon reach Grosvenor Square. When shall I see you at our house?

Tat. Heaven knows, when I shall be able to get out: my lady leads us all such lives! I wish I had such another place as you have of it.

Mar. I have nothing to complain of.

Tat. No, that you have not: when shall I get such a gown as that you have on, by my lady? She will never fling off such a thing, and give it to a poor servant.—Worry, worry, worry, herself, and every body else too.

Enter LADY RESTLESS.

Lady R. No; there is nobody stirring that way. What do I see? a hussy coming out of my house!

Mar. Well, I must begone, Mrs. Tattle: fare you well.

Lady R. She is dizen'd out too! why did not you open the door, Tattle, when I rung?

Tat. I came as soon as possible, madam.

Lady R. Who have you with you here? What is your business, mistress? [To MARMALET.]

Mar. My business, madam!

Lady R. In confusion too! The case is plain.—You come here after Sir John, I suppose.

Mar. I come after Sir John, madam!

Lady R. Guilt in her face! yes, after Sir John:—and, Tattle, you are in the plot against me; you were favouring her escape, were you?

Tat. I favour her escape, madam! What occasion

for that? This is Mrs. Marmalet, madam, an acquaintance of mine, madam, as good a kind of body as any at all.

Lady R. O, very fine, mistress! you bring your creatures after the vile man, do you?

Mar. I assure you, madam, I am a very honest girl.

Lady R. O! I dare say so. Where did you get that gown?

Mar. La, ma'am! I came by it honestly; my Lady Conquest gave it to me. I live with my Lady Conquest, madam.

Lady R. What a complexion she has! How long have you lived in London?

Mar. Three years, madam.

Lady R. In London three years with that complexion! it can't be: perhaps she is painted: all these creatures paint. You are all so many painted dolls. [*Rubs her Face with a white Handkerchief.*] No, it does not come off. So, Mrs. Tattle, you bring your fresh country girls here to my house, do you?

Tat. Upon my credit, ma'am——

Lady R. Don't tell me, I see through this affair.—Go you about your business, mistress, and let me never see you about my doors again. Go, go your ways.

Mar. Lord, ma'am, I shan't trouble your house.—Mrs. Tattle, a good day. Here's a deal to do, indeed! I have as good a house as hers to go to, whatever she may think of herself. [*Exit.*]

Lady R. There, there, there! see there; she goes off in a huff! the way with them all.—Ay, I see how it is, Tattle; you false, ungrateful——that gown was never given her by a woman, she had that from Sir John. Where is Sir John?

Tat. Sir John an't at home, ma'am.

Lady R. Where is he? Where is he gone? When did he go out?

Tat. I really don't know, ma'am.

Lady R. Tattle, I know you fib now : but I'll sift this to the bottom. I'll write to my Lady Conquest, to know the truth about that girl that was here but now.

Tat. You will find I told you truth, ma'am.

Lady R. Very well, Mrs. Pert. I'll go and write this moment. Send Robert, to give me an account of his master. Sir John, Sir John, you will distract me.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter BELINDA and BEVERLEY.

Belin. Ay, but that quickness, that extreme sensibility, is what I am afraid of. I positively would not have a jealous husband for the world.

Ber. By Heaven ! no earthly circumstance shall ever make me think injuriously of you.—Jealousy!—ha, ha!—it is the most ridiculous passion!—ha, ha!

Belin. You may laugh, sir ; but I know your over-refining temper too well, and I absolutely will have it in our marriage-articles, that I must not be plagued with your suspicions.

Ber. I subscribe, ma'am.

Belin. I will have no inquiries where I am going to visit ;—no following me from place to place : and if we should chance to meet, and you should perceive a man of wit, or a pretty fellow, speaking to me, I will not have you fidgetting about on your chair, knitting your brow, and looking at your watch—“ My dear, is it not time to go home?—my love, the coach is waiting :—and then, if you are prevailed upon to stay, I will not have you converse with a “ Yes, sir,” and a “ No, sir,” for the rest of the evening, and then wrangle with me in the carriage all the way home, and not be commonly civil to me for the rest of the night. I positively will have none of this.

Ber. Agreed, ma'am, agreed—I subscribe to every thing you can ask. You shall have what female

friends you please : lose your money to whom you please ; dance with what beau you please ;—ride out with whom you please ;—go to what china shop you please ;—and, in short do what you please, without my attempting to bribe your footman, or your maid, for secret intelligence.

Belin. O lud ! O lud ! that is in the very strain of jealousy.—Deliver me ! there is my father yonder, and Sir William Bellmont with him. Fly this instant—fly, Mr. Beverley, down that walk——any where—

Bev. You promise then——

Belin. Don't talk to me now—what would you be at ?—I am yours, and only yours ; unalterably so.—Fly—begone ! leave me this moment.

Bev. I obey—I am gone—— [Exit.

Belin. Now are they putting their wise heads together to thwart all my schemes of happiness : but love, imperious love, will have it otherwise.

Enter MR. BLANDFORD and SIR WILLIAM BELL-
MONT.

Bland. Sir William, since we have agreed upon every thing——

Sir W. Why yes, Mr. Blandford, I think every thing is settled.

Bland. Why then, we have only to acquaint the young people with our intentions, and so conclude the affair without delay.

Sir W. That is all, sir.

Bland. As to my girl, I don't mind her nonsense about Beverley : she must do as I will have her.

Sir W. And my son too, he must follow my directions. As to his telling me of his love for Clarissa, it is all a joke with me. Children must do as their parents will have them.

Bland. Ay, so they must, and so they shall.—Hey ! here is my daughter !—So, Belinda !——Well, my

girl, Sir William and I have agreed, and you are to prepare for marriage, that's all.

Belin. With Mr. Beverley, sir?

Bland. Mr. Beverley!—

Belin. You know you encouraged him yourself, sir.

Bland. Well, well! I have changed my mind on that head. My friend, Sir William here, offers you his son. Do as I advise you: have a care, Belinda, how you disobey my commands.

Belin. But, sir——

Bland. But, madam, I must and will be obeyed.—You don't like him, you say; but I like him, and that's sufficient for you.

Sir W. And so it is, Mr. Blandford. If my son pretended to have a will of his own, I should let him know to the contrary.

Belin. And can you, Sir William, against our inclination, force us both?

Bland. Hold your tongue, Belinda; don't provoke me. What makes you from home! Go your ways back directly, and settle your mind. I tell you once for all, I will have my own way. Come, Sir William, we will step to the lawyer's chambers. Go home, Belinda, and be observant of my commands.—Come, Sir William.—What did you say? [*To BELINDA.*] You mutiny, do you? Don't provoke me.—You know, Belinda, I am an odd sort of a man when provoked. Lookye here;—mind what I say; I won't reason with you about the matter;—my power is absolute, and if you offer to rebel, you shall have no husband at all, with my consent. I'll cut you off with a shilling;—I'll see you starve; beg an alms; live miserable; die wretched; in short, suffer any calamity, without the least compassion from me. If I find you an undutiful girl, I cast you off for ever. So there's one word for all.

[*Exit*;—SIR WILLIAM follows him.

Belin. What will become of me!—his inhumanity overcomes me quite—I can never consent;—the very sight of this picture is enough to forbid it. O, Beverley, you are master of my heart! I'll go this instant—and—Heavens! I can scarce move. I am ready to faint.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. No tidings of her far or near.

Belin. How I tremble!—I shall fall—no help.

Sir John. What do I see!—a young lady in distress!

Belin. Oh!—

[Faints in his Arms, and drops the Picture.]

Sir John. She is fallen into a fit.—'Would my servants were in the way.

LADY RESTLESS, at the Window.

Lady R. Where can this barbarous man be gone to?—How!—under my very window!

Sir John. How cold she is!—quite cold—

[Lays his Hand on her Cheek.]

Lady R. How familiar he is with her!—

Sir John. And yet she looks beautiful still.

Lady R. Does she so?

Sir John. Her eyes open—How lovely they look!

Lady R. Traitor!

Sir John. Her cheek begins to colour. Well, young lady, how fare you now, my dear?

Lady R. My dear, too!

Belin. Heavens! where am I?—

Sir John. Repose yourself a while; or will you step into my house?

Lady R. No, truly, shan't she. Vile man! I will come down to you directly, and flash confusion in your face.

[Exit from above.]

Sir John. Where do you live, madam?

Belin. In Queen's Square, sir, by the side of the Park.

Sir John. I will wait upon you:—trust yourself with me—You look much better now—Lean on my arm. There, there, I will conduct you.—

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter LADY RESTLESS.

Lady R. Now I'll make one among ye—How! fled!—gone!—which way?—Is not that he, yonder?—No—he went into my house, I dare say, as I came down stairs.—Tattle! Tattle! Robert! Will nobody answer?—

Enter TATTLE.

Where is Sir John?

Tat. La, ma'am, how should I know?

Lady R. Did not he go in this moment?

Tat. No, ma'am.

Lady R. To be sure you will say so. I'll follow him through the world, or I'll find him out.—So, so,—what is here? This is her picture, I suppose. I will make sure of this, at least;—this will discover her to me, though she has escaped me now. Cruel, false, deceitful man! [Exit.]

Tat. Poor lady! I believe her head is turned, for my part.—Well, I am determined I'll look out for another place, that's a sure thing I will. [Exit.]

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

*SIR JOHN'S House.**Enter SIR JOHN and ROBERT.**Sir John.* Robert, where is your lady?*Rob.* In her own room, sir.*Sir John.* Any body with her?*Rob.* I can't say, sir.—My lady is not well.*Sir John.* Not well! fatigued with rioting about this town, I suppose? How long has she been at home?*Rob.* About an hour, sir.*Sir John.* About an hour!—Very well, Robert, you may retire. [*Exit ROBERT.*] Now will I question her closely. So—so—so—she comes, leaning on her maid.—Finely dissembled! finely dissembled! But this pretended illness shall not shelter her from my strict inquiry.—Soft a moment! If I could overhear what passes between them, it might lead to the truth. I'll work by stratagem. The hypocrite! how she acts her part! [*Exit.*]*Enter LADY RESTLESS and TATTLE.**Tat.* How are you now, madam?*Lady R.* Somewhat better, Tatle. Reach that chair. Tattle, tell me honestly, does that girl live with Lady Conquest?*Tat.* She does, madam, upon my veracity.*Lady R.* Very well! you will be obstinate, I see, but I shall know the truth presently. I shall have

an answer from her ladyship, and then all will come out.

Tat. You will hear nothing, ma'am, but what I have told you already.

Lady R. Tattle, Tattle, I took you up in the country, in hopes gratitude would make you my friend. But you are as bad as the rest of them. Conceal all you know: it is of very little consequence. I now see through the whole affair. Though it is the picture of a man, yet I am not to be deceived: I understand it all. This is some former gallant: the creature gave this to Sir John, as a proof that she had no affection for any one but himself. What art he must have had to induce her to this!—I have found him out at last.

Sir John. [*Peeping in.*] What does she say?

Lady R. I have seen enough to convince me what kind of man he is. The fate of us poor women is hard: we all wish for husbands, and they are the torment of our lives.

Tat. There is too much truth in what you say, ma'am.

Sir John. You join her, do you, Mrs. Iniquity?

Lady R. What a pity it is, Tattle, that poor women should be under severer restraints than the men are!

Sir John. You repine for want of freedom, do you?

Lady R. Cruel laws of wedlock! The tyrant husband may triumph in his infidelity. He may securely trample upon all laws of decency and order: it redounds to his credit; gives him a fashionable air of vice, while a poor woman is obliged to submit to his cruelty. She remains tied to him for life, even though she has reason to entertain a mortal hatred for him.

Sir John. Oh! very well argued, madam!

Lady R. What a pity it is, Tattle, that we cannot change our husbands, as we do our ear-rings or our gloves!

Sir John. There is a woman of spirit!

Lady R. Tattle! will you own the truth to me about that girl?

Tat. I really have told you the truth, madam.

Lady R. You won't discover, I see: very well! you may go down stairs.

Tat. I assure your ladyship——

Lady R. Go down stairs.

Tat. Yes, ma'am.

Lady R. 'Would I had never seen my husband's face!

Sir John. I am even with you: I have as good wishes for you, I assure you.

Lady R. This picture here—Oh the base man!

Sir John. The picture of her gallant, I suppose.

Lady R. This is really a handsome picture: what a charming countenance! it is perfumed, I fancy: the scent is agreeable.

Sir John. The jade! how eagerly she kisses it!

Lady R. Why had I not such a dear, dear man, instead of the brute, the monster——

Sir John. Monster!—She does not mince the matter: plain downright English! I must contain my rage, and steal upon her meditations—So—so—so—

Enter SIR JOHN, on Tiptoe.

Lady R. There is no falsehood in this look.

Sir John. [*Looking over her Shoulder.*] Oh! what a handsome dog she has chosen for herself!

Lady R. With you, I could be for ever happy!

Sir John. You could, could you?

[*Snatches the Picture.*

Lady R. [*Screams out.*] Mercy on me!—Oh! is it you, sir.

Sir John. Now, madam, now false one, have I caught you?

Lady R. You are come home at last, I find, sir.

Sir John. My Lady Restless, my Lady Restless, what can you say for yourself now?

Lady R. What can I say for myself, Sir John?

Sir John. Ay, madam! this picture——

Lady R. Yes, sir, that picture!

Sir John. Will be evidence——

Lady R. Of your shame, Sir John.

Sir John. Of my shame! 'tis very true, what she says: yes, madam, it will be an evidence of my shame; I feel that but too sensibly. But on your part——

Lady R. You own it then, do you?

Sir John. Own it! I must own it, madam; though confusion cover me, I must own it: it was what you have deserved at my hands.

Lady R. I deserve it, Sir John! find excuses if you will. Cruel, cruel man!——to make me this return at last. I cannot bear it. Oh! oh! [*Cries.*] Such black injustice!

Sir John. You may weep; but your tears are lost: they fall without effect. I now renounce you for ever. This picture will justify me to the wide world; it will show what a base woman you have been.

Lady R. What does the man mean?

Sir John. Had the original of this fallen to your lot, you could kiss the picture for ever. You can gloat upon it, madam, glue your very lips to it.

Lady R. Shallow artifice!

Sir John. With him you could be for ever happy.

Lady R. This is all in vain, Sir John.

Sir John. Had such a dear, dear man fallen to your lot, instead of the brute, the monster—Am I a monster? I am, and you have made me so. The world shall know your infamy.

Lady R. Oh! brave it out, sir, brave it out to the last: harmless, innocent man! you have nothing to blush for, nothing to be ashamed of: you have no

intrigues, no private amours abroad. I have not seen any thing, not I.

Sir John. Madam, I have seen, and I now see your paramour.

Lady R. That air of confidence will be of great use to you, sir. You have no convenient to meet you under my very window, to loll softly in your arms!

Sir John. Hey! how?

Lady R. Her arm thrown carelessly round your neck! your hand tenderly applied to her cheek.

Sir John. 'Sdeath! that's unlucky—she will turn it against me. [Aside.

Lady R. You are in confusion, are you, sir? But why should you? You meant no harm—"You are safe with me, my dear"—"Will you step into my house, my love?"—Yes, sir, you would fain bring her into my very house.

Sir John. My Lady Restless, this evasion is mean and paltry.—You beheld a lady in distress.

Lady R. Oh, I know it, sir, and you, tender-hearted man, could caress her out of mere compassion; you could gaze wantonly out of charity; from pure benevolence of disposition, you would convey her to some convenient dwelling. O, Sir John, Sir John!

Sir John. Madam, this well acted passion——

Lady R. Don't imagine she has escaped me, sir.

Sir John. You may talk and rave, ma'am, but I will find, by means of this instrument here in my hand, who your darling is. I will go about it straight. Ungrateful, treacherous woman! [Exit.

Lady R. Yes, go under that pretext, in pursuit of your licentious pleasures:—This ever has been his scheme to cloke his wicked practices: abandoned man! to face me down too, after what my eyes so plainly beheld! I wish I could wring that secret out of Tattle. I'll step to my own room directly, and

try by menaces, by wheedling, by fair means, by foul means, by every means to wrest it from her.

[Exit

SCENE II.

The Park.

Enter SIR JOHN and ROBERT.

Sir John. Come hither, Robert. Look at this picture.

Rob. Yes, sir.

Sir John. Let me watch his countenance. Well, well! Dost thou know it, Robert?

Rob. 'Tis a mighty handsome picture, sir.

Sir John. A handsome picture! [Aside.

Rob. The finest lady in the land need not desire a handsomer man, sir.

Sir John. How well he knows the purposes of it! —Well, well! honest Robert, tell me:—well—who is it?—tell me.

Rob. Sir!

Sir John. You know whose picture it is:—I know you do.—Well! well! who—who—who is it?

Rob. Upon my word, sir, it is more than I can tell.

Sir John. Not know! I am convinced you do: so own the truth;—don't be a villain, don't.

Rob. As I am an honest man, sir,—

Sir John. Be an honest man, then, and tell me. Did you never see such a smooth faced, fiery eyed, warm complexioned, taper young fellow, here about my house?

Rob. Never, sir.

Sir John. Not with my wife!—to drink chocolate of a morning, tea of an evening?—Come, honest Robert, I'll give you a lease of a good farm. What say you? A lease for your life—Well, well!—you may take your wife's life into the bargain. Well—

Rob. Believe me, Sir John, I never saw——

Sir John. I'll add your child's life. Come, speak out—your own life, your wife's life, and your child's! now! now! a lease for three lives! Now, Robert!

Rob. As I hope for mercy, I never saw any such a gentleman.

Sir John. Robert, Robert, you are bribed by my wife.

Rob. No, as I am a sinner, sir.

Sir John. And the worst of sinners you will be, if you are a confederate in this plot against my peace and honour. Reflect on that, Robert.

Enter a FOOTMAN.

Foot. Pray, does not Sir John Restless live somewhere hereabout?

Sir John. He does, friend; what is your business with him?

Foot. My business is with his lady.

Sir John. I guessed as much. [*Aside.*

Foot. I have a letter here for my Lady Restless, sir.

Sir John. A letter for my lady!—from whom, pray?

Foot. From my Lord Conquest.

Sir John. My Lord Conquest! very well, friend: you may give the letter to me. I am Sir John Restless; that there is my house. Let me have the letter: I will take care of it.

Foot. I was ordered to deliver it into my lady's own hand.

Sir John. The devil you was! I must have the letter. I'll buy it of the rascal. [*Aside.*]—Here, take this for your trouble, friend—[*Gives him Money.*]—and I'll take care of the letter.

Foot. I humbly thank your honour. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Now, now, now; let me see what this is.

Now, my Lady Restless; now, false one, now,—
[Reads.]

Madam,

My Lady Conquest being gone into the country for a few days, I have judged it proper to send a speedy answer to yours, and to assure you, for your peace of mind, that you need not entertain the least suspicion of Marmalet, my lady's woman. She has lived some years in my family, and I know her by experience to be an honest, trusty girl, incapable of making mischief between your ladyship and Sir John.

I have the honour to be,

Madam, your very humble servant,

CONQUEST.

So! so! so!—Marmalet is a trusty girl; one that will not make mischief between man and wife! that is to say, she will discover nothing against my Lady Restless! for her peace of mind he lets madam know all this too! she may go on boldly now; my Lady Conquest is gone into the country, Marmalet is trusty, and my Lord has given her the most speedy notice. Very well! very well! proofs thicken upon proofs. Shall I go directly and challenge his lordship?—No—no—that won't do. Watch him closely, that will do better. If I could have a word in private with the maid—Robert, Robert, come hither. Step to my Lord Conquest's—but with caution proceed—inquire there for Marmalet, the maid.

Rob. I know her, sir.

Sir John. He knows her!

[*Aside.*]

Rob. She visits our Tattle, sir.

Sir John. Visits our Tattle!—it is a plain case, [Aside.]—Inquire for that girl: but with caution: tell her to meet me privately; unknown to any body; in the dusk of the evening; in the Birdcage Walk, yonder.

Rob. I will, sir.

Sir John. And don't let Tattle see her. Tattle has engaged her in her mistress's interest. I see how it is. Don't let any of my servants see her; go directly, Robert. Now shall I judge what regard you have for me. But, harkye: come hither! a word with you. Should it be known that this girl converses with me; should my lady have the least item of it, they will be upon their guard. Let her come wrapped up in darkness: concealed from every observer, with a mask on. Ay, let it be with a mask.

Rob. A mask, Sir John? Won't that make her be remarked the more?

Sir John. No, no, let her come masked; I will make every thing sure. Robert, bring this about for me, and I am your friend for ever.

Rob. I will do my endeavour, sir. [Exit.

Sir John. I'll now take a turn round the Park, and try if I can find the minion this picture belongs to. [Exit.

Enter BEVERLEY and BELLMONT.

Bev. Yes, they had almost surprised us: but at sight of her father, Belinda gave the word, and away I darted down towards the Canal.

Bell. Was Sir William with him?

Bev. Yes; they had been plotting our ruin. But we shall out-officer them, it is to be hoped.

Bell. Yes; and it is also to be feared, that we shall not.

Bev. Hey! you alarm me; no new mine sprung!

Bell. Nothing but the old story. Our wise fathers are determined. At the turning of yonder corner, they came both full tilt upon Clarissa and me.

Bev. Well, and how! what passed?

Bell. Why, they were scarcely civil to your sister. Sir William fixed his surly eye upon me for some time: at last he began: "You will run counter to

my will, I see: you will be ever dangling after that girl: but Mr. Blandford and I have agreed upon the match: and then he peremptorily commanded me to take my leave of Clarissa, and fix my heart upon your Belinda.

Bev. And did you so?

Bell. And did you so? How can you ask such a question? Sir, says I, I must see the lady home; and off I marched, arm in arm with her, my father bawling after me, and I bowing to him, "Sir, your humble servant, I wish you a good morning, sir." He continued calling out: I kissed my hand to him, and so we made our escape.

Bev. And where have you left Clarissa?

Bell. At home; at your house.

Bev. Well! and do you both continue in the same mind: is to-morrow to be your wedding-day?

Bell. Now are you conjuring up a thousand horrid fancies to torment yourself. But don't be alarmed, my dear Beverley. I shall leave you your Belinda, and content myself with the honour of being your brother-in-law.

Bev. Sir, the honour will be to me—But uneasy! ha! ha!—no—no—I am not uneasy; nor shall I ever be so again.

Bell. Keep that resolution, if you can. Do you dine with us at the club?

Bev. With all my heart: I'll attend you.

Bell. That's right; let us turn towards the Mall, and saunter there till dinner.

Bev. No, I can't go that way yet. I must inquire how Belinda does, and what her father said to her. I have not seen her since we parted in the morning.

Bell. And now, according to custom, you will make her an apology for leaving her, when there was an absolute necessity for it; and you'll fall to an explanation of circumstances, that require no explana-

tion at all, and refine upon things, and torment yourself and her into the bargain.

Bev. Nay, if you begin with your raillery, I am off: your servant; *a l'honneur.* [*Exit.*]

Bell. Poor Beverley!—Though a handsome fellow, and of some agreeable talents, he has such a strange diffidence in himself, and such a solicitude to please, that he is every moment of his life most ingeniously elaborating his own uneasiness.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. Not yet, not yet; nobody like it as yet. Ha! who is that hovering about my house?—If that should be he now!—I'll examine him nearer—Pray, sir—what the devil shall I say?—Pray, sir—

Bell. Sir!

Sir John. I beg pardon for troubling you, sir; but pray what o'clock is it by your watch?

Bell. By my watch, sir?—I'll let you know in a moment.

Sir John. Let me examine him now—

[*Looks at him, and then at the picture.*]

Bell. Egad, I am afraid my watch is not right: it must be later. [*Looking at his Watch.*]

Sir John. It is not like him—

[*Comparing the Picture.*]

Bell. It does not go, I am afraid.

[*Puts it to his Ear.*]

Sir John. The eye——no!

Bell. Well, sir, by my watch it wants a quarter of three.

Sir John. It is not he: and yet—no—no—no—I am still to seek.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Bellmont! Another word with you.

Sir John. Here comes another; they are all swarming about my house.

Bev. I have seen her; I have seen Belinda, my boy: she will be with Clarissa in the park immediately after dinner, you rogue.

Sir John. I want to see his face; this may be the original.

Bev. Her father has been rating her in his usual manner; but your marriage with my sister will settle every thing.

Sir John. I'll walk round him. [*Sings.*] Loll-toll-loll—[*Looks at him.*—ha! it has his air. [*Sings.*] Loll-toll-loll! and it has his eye! Loll-toll-loll——

[*Walks to and fro.*

Bev. Pr'ythee, Bellmont, don't be such a dangling lover, but consummate at once, for the sake of your friend.

Sir John. It has his nose for all the world.

Bell. Do you spirit your sister up to keep her resolution, and to-morrow puts you out of all pain.

Sir John. Loll-toll-loll—it has his complexion; the same glowing hot amorous complexion.

[*Sings and looks uneasy.*

Bev. Who is this gentleman?

Bell. An odd fellow he seems to be.

Sir John. Loll toll-loll!—it has his shoulders. Loll-toll-loll—Ay, and I fancy the mole upon the cheek too —Loll-toll-loll!

Bev. He seems mad, I think. Where are his keepers?

Sir John. Begging your pardon, sir—Pray—[*Looking at him and the Picture.*]—Pray, sir, can you tell whether we shall have a Spanish war?

Bev. Not I, truly, sir.—[*To BELLMONT.*] Here is a politician out of his senses.

Bell. He has been talking to me too: he is too well dressed for a poet.

Bev. Not, if he has had a good subscription.

Sir John. He has the mole sure enough. [*Aside.*

Bev. Let us step this way, to avoid this impertinent blockhead.

Sir John. Ay, he wants to sneak off.—Guilt! guilt! conscious guilt!—I'll make sure of him. Pray, sir, —I beg your pardon—Is not your name Wildair?

Bev. No, sir, Beverley, at your service.

Sir John. Have you no relation of that name?—

Bev. None.

Sir John. You are very like a gentleman of that name—a friend of mine, whose picture I have here—Will you give me leave just to——

[*Compares him with the Picture.*

Bev. An odd adventure this, Bellmont?

Bell. Very odd, indeed.

Bev. Do you find any likeness, sir?

Sir John. Your head a little more that way, if you please.—Ay, ay, it is he! Yes, a plain case; this is my man, or rather this is my wife's man.

Bev. Did you ever know any thing so whimsical?

Bell. Never——ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. They are both laughing at me.—Ay, and I shall be laughed at by the whole town, pointed at, hooted at, and gazed at!

Bev. What do I see? 'Sdeath, the setting of that picture is like what I gave to Belinda. Distraction! if it is the same——

[*Drawing near him.*

Sir John. He makes his approach, and means, I suppose, to snatch it out of my hand. But I'll prevent him; and so, into my pocket it goes. There, lie safe there.

Bev. Confusion! he puts it up in a hurry.—Will you be so good, sir, as to favour me with a——

Sir John. Sir, I wish you a good day.

Bev. —With a sight of that picture for a moment?

Sir John. The picture, sir——Po!—a mere daub——

Bev. A motive of curiosity, sir,——

Sir John. It is not worth your seeing.—I wish you a good day.

Bev. I shall take it as a favour.

Sir John. A paltry thing! I have not a moment to spare; my family is waiting dinner.—Sir, I wish you a good morning. [Runs into his House.]

Bev. Death and fire; Bellmont, my picture?

Bell. O, no—no such thing.

Bev. But I am sure of it.—If Belinda—

Bell. What, relapsing into suspicion again?

Bev. Sir, I have reason to suspect. She slights me, disdains me, treats me with contempt.

Bell. But, I tell you that unhappy temper of yours—Pr'ythee man, leave teasing yourself, and let us adjourn to dinner.

Bev. No, sir, I shan't dine at all. I am not well.

Bell. Ridiculous! how can you be so absurd?—I'll bet you twenty pounds, that is not your picture.

Bev. Done; I take it.

Bell. With all my heart: and I'll tell you more;—if it be yours I will give you leave to be as jealous of her as you please.—Come, now, let us adjourn.

Bev. I attend you.—In the evening we shall know the truth.—If it be that I gave Belinda, she is false, and I am miserable. [Exeunt.]

SIR JOHN, peeping after them.

Sir John. There he goes! there he goes!—the destroyer of my peace and happiness!—I'll follow him, and make sure that he has given me the right name: and, then, my Lady Restless, the mine is sprung, and I have done with you for ever! [Exit.]

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

The Park.

Enter BELINDA and CLARISSA.

Belin. But have you really fixed every thing, Clarissa ?

Clar. Positively ; and to-morrow morning makes me his.

Belin. To-morrow morning !

Clar. Yes, to-morrow morning I release Mr. Bellmont from his fetters, and resign my person to him.

Belin. But tell me now ; am not I a very good girl, to resign such a man to you ?

Clar. Why, indeed, I must confess the obligation.

Belin. Ay ! but to resign him for one whose temper does not promise, that I shall live under so mild a government.

Clar. How do you mean ?

Belin. Why, Mr. Beverley's strange caprices, suspicions, and unaccountable whimsies, are enough to alarm one upon the brink of matrimony.

Clar. Well, I vow I can't help thinking, Belinda, that you are a little subject to vain surmises and suspicions yourself.

Belin. Now, you are an insincere girl. You know I am of a temper too generous, too open——

Clar. I grant all that, but by the constant repetition of the same doubts, I should not wonder to see you most heartily jealous of him in the end.

Belin. Jealous !—O, Heavens !—jealous, indeed !

Clar. Well, I say no more. As to my brother, here he comes, and let him speak for himself.

Enter BEVERLEY and BELLMONT.

Bell. Well, upon my soul, Beverley, you make me laugh at you—but, come, there's an end of the matter.—Ladies, your most obedient. I hope we have not transgressed our time.

Belin. Not in the least; you are both very exact. True as the dial to the sun.

Bev. Although it be not shone upon.

Belin. Although it be not shone upon, Mr. Beverley! Why with that dejected air, pray sir?

Bell. There again, now!—you two are going to commence wrangling lovers once more. Apropos, Belinda,—now Beverley, you shall see—Be so good, ma'am, as to let me see this gentleman's picture.

Belin. His picture! what can you want it for? You shall have it. *[Searching her Pocket.]*

Bell. Now, Beverley, do you confess how wrong you have been?

Bev. Why, I begin to see my mistake. Say not a word to her; she'll never forgive me, if you discover my infirmity. *[Apart.]*

Belin. It is not in that pocket: it must be here. *[Searches.]*

Bell. You have been sad company on account of this strange suspicion.

Bev. I own it—let it drop—say no more. *[Aside.]*

Belin. Well! I protest and vow—where can it be?—Come, gentlemen, this is some trick of yours: you have it among ye. Mr. Bellmont, Mr. Beverley, pray return it to me.

Bev. No, ma'am, it is no trick of ours. *[Angrily.]*

Belin. As I live and breathe, I have not got it.

Bev. What think you now, Bellmont?

Bell. She'll find it presently, man; don't show your humours: be upon your guard; you'll undo yourself else. Clarissa, shall you and I saunter down this walk?

Clar. My brother seems out of humour: what is the matter now?

Bell. I'll tell you presently: let us step this way.

[*Exit, with CLARISSA.*]

Belin. Well, I declare, I don't know what is become of this odious picture.

Bev. This odious picture! how she expresses it!

Belin. You may look grave, sir, but I have it not.

Bev. I know you have not, ma'am; and though you may imagine——

Belin. Imagine! what do you mean?—Imagine what?

Bev. Don't imagine, that I am to be led blindfold as you please.

Belin. Heavens! with what gravity that was said!

Bev. I am not to be deceived; I can see all round me.

Belin. You can?

Bev. I can, madam.

Belin. Well, and how do you like your prospect?

Bev. Oh! you may think to pass it off in raillery: but that picture I have this day seen in the hands of another; in the hands of the very gentleman to whom you gave it.

Belin. To whom I gave it?—have a care, sir; this is another symptom of your jealous temper.

Bev. But I tell you, madam, I saw it in his hand.

Belin. Who is the gentleman?—What's his name?

Bev. His name, madam!—'sdeath! I forgot that circumstance. Though I don't know his name, madam, I know his person: and that is sufficient.

Belin. Go on, sir: you are making yourself very ridiculous in this matter.—Ha! ha!——

Bev. You may laugh, madam, but it is no laughing matter, that let me assure you.

Belin. Oh, brave!—follow your own notions. I gave it away: I have scorned your present. Ha! ha!—Poor Mr. Beverley!

Bev. I don't doubt you, ma'am: I believe you did give it away.

Belin. Mighty well, sir, think so if you please. I shall leave you to your own imagination: it will find wherewithal to entertain you. Ha! ha! the self-tormenting Beverley! yonder I see Clarissa and Mr. Bellmont. I will join them this instant. Your servant, sir. Amuse yourself with your own fancies—ha! ha! [Exit.]

Bev. Plague and distraction!—I can't tell what to make of this. She carries it off with an air of confidence. And yet if that be my picture, which I saw this morning, then it is plain I am only laughed at by her.—I will know the bottom of it. That's the house the gentleman went into. I'll wait on him directly: but they are watching me. I'll walk another way, to elude their observation. Ay! ay! you may laugh, ma'am, but I shall find out all your artifices. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

An Apartment at SIR JOHN'S.

Enter LADY RESTLESS, meeting ROBERT.

Lady R. Where are you going, sir?

Rob. To my master's room, madam, to leave these clothes there.

Lady R. Stay, sir; stay a moment.

[Searches the Pockets.]

Where are his letters?

Rob. Letters, my lady! I know of no letters: I never touch his pockets.

Lady R. I guessed you would say so. You are Sir John's agent; the conductor of his schemes.

Rob. I, madam!

Lady R. You, sir, you are his secretary for love affairs.

Rob. I collect his rents, my lady, and——

Lady R. Oh! sir, I am not to be deceived. I know you are my enemy.

Rob. Enemy, my lady! I am sure, as far as a poor servant dare, I am a friend to both.

Lady R. Then tell me honestly, have not you conveyed his letters out of my way?

Rob. Indeed, madam, not I.

Lady R. Then he has done it himself. Artful man! I never can find a line after him. Where did you go for him this morning?

Rob. This morning!

Lady R. Ay! this morning. I know he sent you somewhere. Where was it?

Rob. Upon my word, my lady——

Lady R. Very well, sir: I see how it is. You are all bent against me. I shall never beat rest till every servant in this house is of my own chusing. Is Tattle come home yet?

Rob. No, madam.

Lady R. Where can she be gadding? Hark!—I hear a rap at the door. This is Sir John, I suppose. Stay, let me listen. I don't know that voice. Who can it be? Some of his libertine company, I suppose.

Rob. My lady, if you will believe me——

Lady R. Hold your tongue, man: let me hear. You want to hinder me, do you?

Rob. Indeed, madam——

Lady R. Hold your tongue, I say! won't you hold your tongue? Go about your business, sir, go about your business. What does he say? [*Listening.*] I can't hear a word. Who is below there?

Enter TATTLE, with a Capuchin on.

Lady R. So, Mrs. Tattle, who is that at the door?

Tat. A gentleman, madam, speaking to William.

Lady R. And where have you been, mistress? How dare you go out without my leave?

Tat. Dear my lady, don't be angry with me. I was so terrified about what happened in the morning; and your ladyship was in such a perilous taking about it, that I went to desire Mrs. Marmalet would justify herself and me.

Lady R. Oh! very well, Mrs. Busy-Body: You have been there, have you? You have been to frame a story among yourselves, have you, and to hinder me from discovering? But I'll go to my Lady Conquest myself. I have had no answer to my letter, and 'tis you have occasioned it. Thanks to your meddling!

Tat. Dear my lady, if you will but give me leave:—I have been doing you the greatest piece of service. I believe, in my conscience, there is something in what you suspect about Sir John.

Lady R. Do you? why? how?

Tat. I have seen Mrs. Marmalet, and I have made such a discovery!

Lady R. Have you, Tattle? Well! What? speak, tell me; what is it?

Tat. Robert has been there, madam, with a message from Sir John, who wants to see her in the evening; and he has desired——

Lady R. Blessings on you, Tattle: well; go on; tell me all.

Enter a SERVANT.

What do you want, sir? Who called you? Go about your business.

Serv. Madam, there is a gentleman wants to speak with Sir John, about a picture.

Lady R. I had forgot me. It was he rapped at the door, I suppose.

Serv. Yes, madam!

Lady R. About a picture!—This may lead to some further discovery. Desire the gentleman to step up stairs. [*Exit SERVANT.*—and so, Tattle, Robert has been there?

Tat. Yes, ma'am.

Lady R. And Sir John wants to speak with Marmalet in the evening, and has desired——What has he desired?

Tat. He has desired, ma'am,—the poor girl does not know what to make of it—She is very sober and discreet, I assure you, ma'am—he has desired, ma'am, in the dusk of the evening, that Mrs. Marmalet will come and——

Lady R. How unlucky this is! The gentleman is coming. I have a mind not to see him: and yet I will too. Tattle, do you step to my room; as soon as he goes, I will come to you, and hear all in private. [*Exit TATTLE.*] In the dusk of the evening he desires to see her: abandoned wretch!

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Madam——

[*Bows.*

Lady R. Pray walk in, sir.

[*Courtesies:*

Bev. I wanted a word with Sir John Restless, madam.

Lady R. About a picture?

Bev. Yes, madam, a picture I had given to a lady; and however insignificant in itself, it is to me of the highest consequence, as it may conduce to the explanation of an affair, in which the happiness of my life is concerned.

Lady R. The lady is young?

Bev. She is.

Lady R. And handsome?

Bev. In the highest degree; my heart is devoted to her; and I have reason to suspect, that a present from me is not of so much value as I could wish. To be plain, ma'am, I imagine she has given the picture away.

Lady R. As I guessed: my suspicions are just.

Bev. Your suspicions, madam! Did you suspect it was given to Sir John Restless?

Lady R. What I know of the matter shall be no

secret to you.—Pray, sir, have you spoke to the lady on this subject?

Bev. I have, but she knows nothing of the matter; she has lost it, she has mislaid it, she can give no account of it.

Lady R. She has given it to Sir John, sir, to show him how little she regards it.

Bev. Given it to him?

Lady R. Given it to him, sir.

Bev. Then I have no further doubt.

Lady R. Of what?

Bev. Madam, I would not hurt your peace of mind: I would not give you an impression of Sir John, that may affect his character.

Lady R. O, sir, stand upon no ceremony with him; an injurious, false, licentious man!

Bev. Is that his character?

Lady R. Notoriously:—he has made me miserable.—O, Sir John, Sir John! [Cries.

Bev. She weeps; the case is plain, and I am undone.

Lady R. Pray, sir, what is the lady's name?

Bev. Belinda Blandford.

Lady R. Belinda Blandford: So far I have discovered. [Aside.

Bev. Pray, madam, have you ever seen her?

Lady R. Seen her, sir! yes, I have seen too much of her.

Bev. You alarm me, madam. You have seen nothing improper, I hope?

Lady R. I don't know what you call improper: but, pray, what ought one to think of a young lady, thrown familiarly into a gentleman's arms?

Bev. In his arms, madam! Sir John's arms!

Lady R. In Sir John's!—in open day;—in the Park;—under my very window;—most familiarly, wantonly reclining in his very arms!

Bev. O, Heavens!

Lady R. He clasping her with equal freedom round the waist.

Bev. False, false, Belinda !

Lady R. Both interchanging fond, mutual, glances.

Bev. O, madam ! the whole is come to light, and I thank you for the discovery, though I am ruined by it. But give me leave ;—is all this certain ?

Lady R. There can be no doubt, sir ; these eyes beheld their amorous meeting.

Bev. Saw it yourself ?

Lady R. Yes, all, all, sir. Sir John, I know is capable of any thing, and you know what to think of Belinda, as you call her.

Bev. I now know what to think :—I have long had reason to suspect.

Lady R. You have, sir ? then the whole affair is plain enough.

Bev. It is so. I meant an honourable connexion with her ;—but—

Lady R. But you see, sir !—

Bev. Yes, I see, madam——You are sure Sir John has the picture ?

Lady R. Sure, sir !—it is your own picture. I had it in my hands but a moment, and he flew with ardour, with impetuosity, like a fury flew to it, and recovered it from me.—What could be the meaning of all that violence.

Bev. The meaning is too plain.

Lady R. And then, sir, when charged and pressed home with his guilt, most hypocritically he pretended to believe it the portrait of some favourite of mine. But you know, sir, how false that insinuation is.

Bev. O, madam, I can justify you—Ha, ha ! that is but a poor evasion, and confirms me the more in my opinion.—I return you many thanks, madam, and humbly take my leave.

Lady R. Sir, I am glad you thought it prudent to

Speak to me about this affair. If any other circumstances come to your knowledge, I shall take it as a favour if you will acquaint me with them ; for, indeed, sir, I am very unhappy.

Bev. I am in gratitude bound to you, and my best services you shall ever command. Madam, your most obedient——O, Belinda ! Belinda. [Exit.

Lady R. Now, Sir John, how will you be able to confront these stubborn facts ?—You are now seen through all your disguises ; detected in your true colours. Tattle, within here, has fresh proofs against you, and your man Robert, and the whole house.—I must hear Tattle's story this very moment, [Exit.

SCENE III.

The Park.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. Yes, yes, he told me his name honestly enough. Beverley is his name :—and, my Lady Restless, now your gallant, your paramour is known.—What do I see ! By all my wrongs, the very man again ! coming out of my house, before my face !

Enter BEVERLEY and ROBERT, from the House.

Bev. There, friend, there's something for your trouble.

Rob. I thank your honour. [Exit.

Sir John. He bribes my servant too ;—and the fellow takes it !—Both in their trade ; both in their trade.

Bev. Could I have suspected her of such treachery ?——As I could wish—I take that to be Sir John Restless.

Sir John. This is he, to whom I have so many obligations. [Aside.

Bev. Well encountered ;—your servant, sir.

Sir John. My servant, sir !—I rather take it you are my lady's servant.

Bev. You, if I don't mistake, Sir John, are a pretty general servant of the ladies. Pray, sir, have not you a picture of mine in your pocket ?

Sir John. That, I suppose, you have heard from my good lady within there ?

Bev. Yes, sir, and I have heard a great deal more from my lady.

Sir John. I don't in the least doubt it.

Bev. Sir, I do not mean to work myself up into any choler about such a trifling bauble. Since the lady has thought proper to give it to you—

Sir John. Do her justice pray ; she did not give it ; so far she was true to you.—I took it from her sir.

Bev. Took it from her ! That shows he is upon easy terms. [Aside.]—It is of no consequence to me ; I despise it, and you are welcome to make what use you will of it. This I will only say, that you have madame miserable.

Sir John. What, I have interrupted your happiness ?

Bev. You have.

Sir John. And no doubt you think it cruel of me so to do.

Bev. Call it by what name you will ; you have ruined me with the woman I doted on to distraction.

Sir John. A candid declaration !—And so, sir, you doted on her, and never reflected that you were doing me the least injury ?

Bev. Injury !—I promise you, sir, I will never injure you again, and so you may set your mind at peace, I here declare, I never will hold farther intercourse with her.

Sir John. O, that is too late for me.—I have now done with her myself. You are very welcome to the lady, sir!—you may take her home with you as soon as you please. I forswear her, and so I shall tell my lady this moment. [Going.]

Bev. That will make her ladyship happy, no doubt.

Sir John. Yes, I dare say you know it will.

Bev. She told me as much, sir.

Sir John. She did!—why then you may depend I shall keep my word; and my Lady may depend upon it too. And that, I suppose, will make you both happy, sir.

Bev. My happiness is past recalling: I disdain all further connexion with the lady.

Sir John. Ay, you are tired of her?

Bev. I loathe her, detest her, hate her as much as I ever loved her.

Sir John. And so do I, damme, if I don't. And so I shall tell my lady this very instant.—Your servant, sir. If I can find proof sufficient, you shall hear of me, I promise you. [Exit.]

Bev. I see how it is;—she has been connected with him, till she has pall'd his very appetite. 'Sdeath, I'll seek her this moment, upbraid her with her falsehood, and then—by Heavens! I shall do it with regret. I feel a tug at my heart-string; but were I to be torn piecemeal, this shall be our last interview.

Enter BELINDA, CLARISSA, and BELLMONT.

Belin. Alas a day! poor soul! see where he takes his melancholy walk. Did not I tell you, Clarissa, that the stricken deer could not quit this place?

Clar. And did not I tell you, Belinda, that you could not keep away from the pursuit?

Bell. Pray, ma'am, do you want to be in at the death, or do you mean to bring the poor thing to life again?

Belin. I!—what do you mean?—You bring me this way.

Clar. Well, if that is the case, we had as good go home, for I want my tea.

Belin. Po! not yet: it is not six o'clock.

Bell. }
Clar. } Ha, ha!

Belin. What do you laugh at?

Clar. At you, my dear:—why; 'tis past seven. Belinda, you are the stricken deer, I find.

Belin. Who, I?—Not I, truly; I——

Clar. My dear Belinda, I know you. Come, we will do the good-natured thing by you, and leave you to yourselves. Success attend you.—Come, Mr. Bellmont. [Exeunt.

Belin. Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Sacharissa lov'd, but lov'd in vain.

Bev. Poh! poh!

Belin. Won't you know me, sir?

Bev. Yes, madam, I know you:—it is but too true that I know you.

Belin. Still gloomy and discontented! Come come, under pain of my displeasure, brighten up this moment.

Bev. Silly, idle, ridiculous!

Belin. Take care of what you are about. When I proclaim a pardon, you had better embrace it, than reduce yourself to the necessity of sighing, vowing, protesting, writing to me, following me up and down, kneeling at my feet, imploring forgiveness,——

Bev. Madam, you will never again see me humbled to that low degree.

Belin. Upon my word!—ha, ha, ha!

Bev. O, you may laugh, ma'am; you have too long imposed upon my fond, easy credulity. But the witchery of your charms is over.

Belin. Very well, sir!—and you are your own man again.

Bev. I am, madam, and you may be your own woman again, or any body's woman, or every body's.

Belin. You grow rude, sir!

Bev. It is time to wave all ceremony, and to tell you plainly, that your falsehood——

Belin. My falsehood, sir!

Bev. Your falsehood!—I know the whole story. I loved you once, Belinda, tenderly loved you; and by Heaven, I swear, it is with sorrow that I can no longer adore you.—It is with anguish that I now bid you an everlasting farewell.

Belin. Explain, sir: what action of my life?——

Bev. Your prudence forsook you at last. It was too glaring; too manifest in open day!

Belin. Too manifest in open day!—Mr. Beverley, I shall hate you.

Bev. All circumstances inform against you: my picture given away!

Belin. Insolent; provoking! wrong-headed man! I'll confirm him in his error, to torment him as he deserves. [*Aside.*] Well, sir, what if I chose to give it away! I am mistress of my own actions, am I not?

Bev. I know that, ma'am: I know that; and I am not uneasy, ma'am.

Belin. So it seems—ha! ha!—why do you sigh, poor man?

Bev. Sigh, madam! I disdain it.

Belin. I am glad of it; now that is so manly! but pray watch yourself well, hold a guard upon all your passions, otherwise they will make a fool of you again.

Bev. And do you take care you don't expose yourself again. Lolling familiarly in a gentleman's arms.

Belin. How!

Bev. Here, in the Park! in open day!

Belin. What can this mean?

Ber. He inviting you to his house!

Belin. Oh! I understand him now; when I fainted, all this was. I'll encourage his notion, to be revenged of his waspish temper. [*Aside.*] Well, sir, and what then?

Ber. What then?

Belin. Ha! ha! poor Mr. Beverley!—why should you be in a piteous taking, because I, in the gaiety of my heart, give away a picture I set no value on, or walk with a gentleman I do set a value on, or lean on his arm, or make the man happy by letting him draw on my glove.

Ber. Or draw off your glove, madam.

Belin. Ay! or draw it off!

Ber. Yes, or—or—or take any other liberties.

Belin. Very true.

Ber. You may make light of it, madam, but——

Belin. Why yes, a generous temper always makes light of the favours it confers.

Ber. And some generous tempers will make light of any thing to gratify their inclinations. Madam, I have done: I abjure you; eternally abjure you.

[*Going.*]

Belin. Bon voyage!

Ber. Don't imagine that you will see me again.

Belin. Adieu!——Well, what coming again? Why do you linger so? [*Repeats affectedly.*]

Thus o'er the dying lamp, the unsteady flame
Hangs quivering to a point!

Ber. With what an air she carries it! I have but this one thing more to tell you: by Heaven I loved you, to excess I loved you: such is my weakness, I shall never quite forget you. I shall be glad, if hereafter I hear of your happiness, and if I can, no dishonour shall befall you.

Belin. Ho! ho!—well! my obliging, generous Don Quixote, go and fight windmills, and castles in the

air, and a thousand phantoms of your own creation, for your Dulcinea's sake! ho! ho! ho!

Bev. Confusion! Take notice, madam, that this is the last time of my troubling you.

Belin. I shall expect you to-morrow morning.

Bev. No, never; by Heaven, never!

Belin. Exactly at ten; your usual hour.

Bev. May I perish at your feet, if ever again——

Belin. Oh! brave! but remember ten; kneeling, beseeching, imploring, your hand upon your heart, “Belinda, won't you forgive me?”

Bev. Damnation!—I have done: I here bid you an eternal adieu!—farewell for ever! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in BEVERLEY'S House.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. So! Belinda, I have escaped your snares: I have recovered my freedom. And yet, if she had not proved false, what a treasure of love and happiness had I in store! her beauty—poh! no more of her beauty: it is external, superficial, the mere result of features and complexion. A deceitful Syren, to draw the unwary into a dream of happiness, and then wake him into wonder at the storms and tempests that gather round him. I have done with her; I'll think no more of her. Oh! Belinda! Belinda!

Enter BRUSH.

Brush. Please your honour——

Bev. She, that in every part of life seemed so amiable!

Brush. Sir!

Bev. Under so fair a mask, to wear such loose designs!

Brush. What is he musing upon?—Sir——

Bev. I have done with her for ever; ay, for ever. [*Hums a Tune.*] I swear for ever. [*Sings.*] Are you there, Brush?

Brush. Yes, your honour: here is a letter.

Bev. So unforeseen, so unexpected, a discovery! Well! well! well! what did you say, Brush?

Brush. A letter for your honour, sir.

Bev. Give it to me another time. [*Walks about.*] I'll not make myself uneasy about her.

Brush. I fancy your honour will be glad to have it now.

Bev. What did you say?

Brush. It is a letter from Madam Belinda, sir.

Bev. Belinda! I won't read it: take it away.

Brush. Hey! which way is the wind now? Some quarrel, I suppose: bnt the falling out of lovers—Must I take it away, sir?

Bev. I have done with her for ever.

Brush. Have done with Madam Belinda sir!

Bev. Oh! Brush, she is—but I will not proclaim her shame. No, let me still be tender of her. I will see her no more, Brush, that is all; hear from her no more: she shall not wind herself about my heart again. I'll go out of town directly: order my chaise to the door.

Brush. Had not you better defer it till to-morrow morning, sir? perhaps then——

Bev. No, no; directly; do as I bid you.

Brush. Consider, sir, if your mind should change, the trouble of coming back post-haste——

Bev. No, never; I say, never: what! to her, who could smile on me, on him, on a thousand? No; she shall know that I am a man; and no longer the dupe of her artifice.

Brush. But, sir, you know that one solitary tear, which, after miserably chafing for it half an hour together, she will painfully distil from the corner of her eye, will extinguish all her rage, and then——

Bev. Poh! poh! you know nothing of the matter. Go, and order the chaise directly.

Brush. Yes, sir, I suppose a couple of shirts will be sufficient, sir?—you will hardly stay them out.

Bev. Pack up all, sir. I shall stay in the country a whole month, if it be necessary.

Brush. An entire month, sir!

Bev. I am resolved, fixed, determined; and so, do as I have ordered you. [*Exit BRUSH.*—So shall I disentangle myself from her entirely, so shall I forget the fondness my foolish heart had conceived for her. I hate her, loathe her, pity her, am sorry for her, and love her still. I must expel this weakness: I will think no more of her: and yet—Brush! Brush!--I may as well see her letter too: only to try what her cunning can suggest.

Enter BRUSH.

You may as well leave the letter, Brush.

Brush. Yes, sir; I thought as much. [*Exit.*

Bev. Now, what varnish will she put upon the matter!—[*Reads.*—“The false gaiety of my heart, through which my dear Beverley might have read my real anguish at our last meeting, has now subsided. If you will come to me, I will not laugh at your inquietude

of temper, but will clear all your doubts, and show you how much I am, my dearest Beverley, unalterably yours,
BELINDA BLANDFORD."

Pshaw! poh! satisfy my doubts! I have no doubts; I am convinced. These arts prevail no more. Ha! ha! [*Laughs peevishly.*]—My dear Beverley—[*Reads, and tears the Letter by degrees.*]—*real anguish*—ha! ha! [*Tears another Piece.*]—*inquietude of temper*—[*Another Piece.*]—*clear all your doubts*—Poh! poh! poh!—ha! ha!—*damnation!*—I'll think no more of her—[*Tears another Bit.*]—Ha! ha!—*dearest Beverley*—ha! ha!—*artful woman!*—*unalterably yours*—false! false! false!—[*Tears another Piece.*]—I'll not make myself uneasy about her. *Perfidy! treachery! and ingratitude!*

[*Fixes his Eye, looks uneasy, and tears the Letter in a violent Passion.*]

Enter CLARISSA and BELLMONT.

Clar. So, brother!

Bell. Beverley!

Bev. Sister, your servant: Mr. Belmont, yours.

Clar. You seem melancholy, brother.

Bev. No, not I. I am in very good spirits.

Clar. Ha! ha! my dear brother, that is seen through: you are now upon the rack.

Bev. What, about a woman! a false, ungrateful woman!

Bell. Whom you still admire.

Clar. To whom you'll be upon your knees in five minutes.

Bev. You are mistaken: I am going out of town.

Bell. But you will take your leave?

Bev. I have done that, once for all.

Clar. Has not she writ to you?

Bev. She has; and there,—there you see the effect of her letter. You will see that I shall maintain a proper firmness on the occasion.

Bell. My dear Beverley, have done with this mockery: you deceive yourself.

Bev. You want to deceive me, sir: but it is in vain. What, plead for treachery, for falsehood, for deceit?

Clar. No, sir; but for my friend, my lovely friend, for Belinda, for truth, for innocence.

Bev. You don't know all the circumstances.

Clar. But we do know all the circumstances; and, my dear brother, you have behaved very ill.

Bev. Heaven knows, I have not; and yet, Heaven knows, I should be glad to be convinced I have.

Clar. I will be your friend, and give you a hint. We women are soft and compassionate in our nature; go to her without delay, fall at her feet, beg her pardon, drop a tear or two, and all will be well again.

Bev. Do you come to make sport of me? May contempt and beggary attend me; may all the calamities of life befall me; may shame, confusion, and disquiet of heart for ever sting me, if I hold further intercourse with her; if I do not put her from my thoughts for ever. Did you leave her at home?

Clar. We did.

Bev. Well, let her stay there: it is of no consequence to me. How did she bear what passed between us?

Clar. Like a sweet girl as she is: she behaved like an angel: I shall love her better than ever for her good humour.

Bev. Oh! I don't doubt her good humour. She has smiles at command. Let her smile or not smile, 'tis all alike to me: did she say any thing?

Clar. She told us the whole story, and told it in tears too.

Bev. Ay, then she can command too! But I have no curiosity about her: Was she in tears?

Clar. She was, and wept bitterly. How could you, brother, behave so rashly to so amiable a girl?

Have you a pleasure in being the cause of her uneasiness?

Bev. I the cause?—you wrong me, by Heaven you wrong me: my Lady Restless was the cause. She told me such things; she planted daggers in my very heart.

Clar. You planted daggers in Belinda's heart. And it was barbarous. What! because a lady has not strength enough to bear up against a father, who is resolved to give her away to another, and because she faints, out of excessive tenderness for you, and in that distress meets accidental relief from Sir John Restless, at his own door?

Bev. How!

Clar. And because my Lady Restless sees this out of her window, and has a perverse talent of misinterpreting appearances into realities, to her own disadvantage; you must therefore fill your head with ungenerous suspicions? Oh! for shame, brother; how could you?

Bev. But, is all this true?—is it really the case?

Bell. How can you doubt it? You know Belinda too well.

Bev. Why, if what you say can be made to appear—but then she'll never forgive my past behaviour.

Clar. Poh! you talk as if you were wholly unletter'd in the tempers of women. My dear brother, you know, you men can do what you please with us, when you have once gained an interest in our hearts. Go to her, I say; go to her, and make your peace.

Bev. May I depend upon what you say?

Clar. You may.

Bev. Then I'll fly to her this instant, humble myself to her, and promise by all my future life to atone for this brutal injury.

Enter BRUSH.

Brush. The chaise is at the door, sir.

Bev. You may put up again; I shan't go out of town.

Brush. No, sir!

Bev. No—ha! ha!—you may put up, and let me have the chariot directly.

Brush. Yes, sir; I knew it would come to this.

[*Exit.*

Bev. My dear sister, I am for ever obliged to you; and, Bellmont, I thank you too. How could I wrong her so? I shall behold her once again. I cannot help laughing at my own rashness. Is the chariot ready?—I won't stay for it; I am on the wing, my dear Belinda, to implore forgiveness. And so she fainted away in the Park, and my Lady Restless saw Sir John afford her relief?—Ha! ha! ha!—whimsical enough. Ha! ha! ha! what a strange construction her crazy temper put upon it? Ha! ha! how could the woman be so foolish? My dear Belinda, I will fly to you this moment—ha! ha! [*Going, returns.*] Sir John shall give me back the picture, and, on my knees, I will once more present it to her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment at BELINDA'S.

Enter BELINDA.

Belin. This rash, unaccountable man! how could he entertain such a suspicion! ungrateful Beverley! he almost deserves I should never see him again. Tippet! I shan't be easy till I hear from him. Tippet!

Enter TIPPET.

Belin. Is the servant returned from Mr. Beverley's?

Tip. Not yet, madam.

Belin. I wonder what keeps him. I am upon thorns till I see the dear, ungenerous man, and explain every thing to him. Oh! Mr. Beverley! how could you treat me so? But I was partly to blame; my Lady Restless inflamed his mind, and I should not have trifled with his passion. Is the other servant returned from Sir John Restless?

Tip. He is, madam.

Belin. And what answer?

Tip. Sir John will wait upon you himself, madam, directly.

Belin. Very well! I must get him to set every thing in its true light, and justify my conduct to Mr. Beverley. And yet the uncertainty of Beverley's temper alarms me strangely. His eternal suspicions! but there is nothing in that: my future conduct, my regard for him, will cure that disease, and then——

Tip. I dare be sworn it will, ma'am.

Belin. Yes, I think it will: when he knows me better, he will learn to think generously of me. On my part, I think I can be sure he will meet with nothing but open, unsuspecting love.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir John Restless, madam.

Belin. Show him in.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. In compliance with your commands, madam——

Belin. I am obliged to you, sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself. A particular cir-

cumstance has happened in your family, to my utter disquiet.

Sir John. Madam, there have happened things in my family, to my utter disquiet too.

Belin. I am sorry for that, sir. I have been made quite unhappy, and must beg, as it is in your power, that you will be kind enough to remove the cause of my uneasiness.

Sir John. Whatever I can do, you may command.

Belin. Sir, I thank you, and must tell you, that your lady has done me the most irreparable injury.

Sir John. She has done the same to me. My injuries are irreparable too. But how has she injured you, madam?

Belin. She has ruined me, sir, with the man I love to distraction.

Sir John. Now, here something else will come to light. [*Aside.*—How, how has she done that, madam?

Belin. She has entirely drawn off his affections from me.

Sir John. And fixed them upon herself, I suppose.

Belin. I don't say that, sir.

Sir John. But I dare say it; and I believe it.

Belin. Pardon me, sir; I don't charge the lady with any thing of that kind: but she has unaccountably taken it into her head to be jealous of me.

Sir John. Jealous of you!

Belin. Her ladyship saw the little offices of civility I received from you this morning: she misunderstood every thing, it seems, and has told the gentleman, with whom I was engaged in a treaty of marriage, that improper freedoms have passed between us.

Sir John. Artifice! artifice! her usual policy, madam, to cover her own libertine ways.

Belin. I don't mean to say any thing harsh of the lady. But you know what foundation there is for this, and I hope will do me justice.

Sir John. Oh ! madam, to the world, to the wide world, I'll justify you. I will wait upon the gentleman. Who is he, madam ? What's his name ?

Belin. Beverley, sir.

Sir John. Beverley !

Belin. Yes, sir ; you seem surprised. Do you know him, sir ?

Sir John. Yes, yes, I know him ? and he shall know me : my resentment he shall feel ; he shall be answerable to me.

Belin. Answerable to you !

Sir John. To me, madam. I told you at first it was her scheme to shelter herself ; and he, I suppose, is combined with her to give this turn to the affair, and to charge me with infidelity. But you, ma'am, can witness for me.

Belin. I can, sir ; but can Mr. Beverley be capable of a dishonourable action ?

Sir John. That point is clear enough. He has injured me in the highest degree, destroyed my happiness.

Belin. How, sir ? are you sure of this ?

Sir John. He has given her his picture ; I caught her with her eyes rivetted to it ; I heard her admiration, her praises of it ; her wishes that she had been married to such a man. I saw her print a thousand kisses on it ; and, in the very fact, I wrested it out of her hand.

Belin. If I imagined him capable of what you say, I should scarcely be willing to join myself to him for life. Quarrel with me about his picture, and at the same time give it to another !

Sir John. Lady Restless had the picture. Without doubt, you must be very happy with a man of such gallantry.

Belin. Happy, sir ! I should be miserable ; distracted ; I should break my heart. But do you think you have sufficient proof ?

Sir John. I have seen him coming out of my house since, clandestinely, shunning every observant eye, with the characters of guilt in his face; and all the discourse I had with him, served only to convince me the more.

Belin. Abandoned wretch! was this the love he professed for me? Sir, I have only to hope you will vindicate me in this matter. I commend myself to your honour, and I thank you for this favour.

Sir John. Our evidences will mutually speak for each other, and confound their dark designs. Madam, I take my leave.

Belin. Sir, your most obedient.

Sir John. The gentleman shall feel my indignation.

Belin. You cannot treat him too severely.

Sir John. I will expose him, I promise you. Madam, your humble servant. [Exit.

Belin. Oh! Mr. Beverley, could I have imagined this? False! false man! and yet how shall I forget him! but I will make an effort, though it pierce me to the quick. I will tear him from my heart. This moment I will write to him, and forbid him to see me more. [Exit

SCENE III.

The Park.

Enter SIR JOHN.

Sir John. If I can procure sufficient evidence, I shall bring the matter to a divorce, and make an example of them all. Would Marmalet were come: this is her time to a moment. If I can worm the secret out of her—Is not that she yonder?—Not quite

daylight enough to distinguish, but I think I perceive a person masked. Hist! hist!—Mrs. Marmalet—she comes this way: it is she. Mrs. Marmalet, your servant.

Enter a Person MASKED.

Sir John. You are very good, Mrs. Marmalet—

Mask. Bless my heart, I am scared out of my senses.

Sir John. What's the matter, pray? What's the matter?

Mask. Oh, Sir! I tremble like a leaf. I was accosted in a rude manner by some gentlemen yonder; I can't stay here, let's go into your house, sir; I beg you will.

Sir John. My house? Would not any other house do as well?

Mask. Oh! no, sir; not for the world.

Sir John. Why, my wife is not at home, and so I think I may venture: not but I had rather it were elsewhere.

Mask. Indeed, Sir John, I am frightened out of my senses. You will do me a favour if you will take me into the house.

Sir John. Say no more: it shall be so. Robert—

Rob. [Opening the Door.] Is that Sir John?

Sir John. Your lady is not at home, Robert, is she?

Rob. No, sir.

Sir John. Then do you go in, and take care that nobody sees Mrs. Marmalet with me. Come, I'll show you the way. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

SIR JOHN'S House.

Enter TATTLE and BEVERLEY.

Tat. [*As she enters.*] Ay, poor lady! she is unfortunate, indeed; and, poor gentleman, he is as jealous as my lady, to the full. There has been a deal to do about that picture you mention, sir.

Bev. That will be explained presently: I'll wait till he comes home. I can't possibly go without speaking to him.

Tat. Indeed, you had better not stay, sir. You don't consider the mischief your being in the house may occasion.

Bev. Mischief, how do you mean?

Tat. Lord, sir! I would not have you stay for the world: I would not indeed. You can call again in an hour, sir, and you'll certainly find him at home then. Bless my heart, sir!—I fancy that's his voice. Do, dear sir! you'll be the ruin of my lady, if he sees you here, sir, waiting in his house: he'll be persuaded you come after my lady; the world will never beat it out of his head.

Bev. But I shall give him to understand——

Tat. He won't understand any thing. Oh lud! oh lud! he's coming up: I'll run and look. [*Erit.*

Bev. What a flurry the woman is in! a foolish jade! I must speak with him now.

Tat. [*Entering.*] It is he, as I am alive, sir; and there is a woman in a mask with him.

Bev. A woman in a mask! Zoons! if that should be Belinda! my mind misgives me strangely. [*Aside.*

Tat. Do, dear sir; you look like a good natured

gentleman; let me hide you out of the way, sir. You would not be the destruction of a poor servant.

Bev. A mask coming home with him! I must know who that is. I won't leave the house without knowing. If I could conceal myself—have you any private place, Mrs. Tattle?

Tat. That is the very thing I mean, sir. Let me conceal you in that closet, till he passes through this room. He never stays long here. It won't take you two minutes. Do, sweet sir, I'll down on my knees to you.

Bev. I must know who it is. Come, dispose of me as you will. If this should be Belinda! [*Exit.*]

Tat. Heavens bless you, sir, for this goodness! I'll lock the door, to make sure work of it. I was never so frightened in my life. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR JOHN and a Person masked.

Sir John. Mrs. Marmalet, I am obliged to you for this favour. I wanted a word or two with you.

Mask. So Robert informed me, sir.

Sir John. Did he tell you my business?

Mask. No, sir.

Sir John. Lookye, then: if you will gratify me in what I shall ask, you may command any thing. Now you may be uncovered.

Mask. La! sir—I hear a noise: I am afraid somebody's coming: I shall be seen.

Sir John. Hush! no; there's nobody. If you will indulge me on this occasion, I am yours for ever. Here, here is a purse of money for you.

Mask. But if this should come to the knowledge of your lady, I am ruined and undone.

Sir John. No, no; I'll take care of you.

Mask. Will you, sir?

Sir John. I will. But come; let me remove this from your face.

Mask. But somebody may come.

Sir John. I'll lock the door.—There, now we are safe.

Mask. But, in a little time, you'll make up all quarrels with your lady, and I shall be ruined.

Sir John. No, no, never fear; I shall never be reconciled to her;—I hate her; I detest her.

Lady R. Do you so, sir? [*Unmasking.*] Now, Sir John, what can you say now, sir!

Sir John. My Lady Restless?—Confusion!—what shall I say?

Lady R. O, Sir John! Sir John! what evasion have you now sir? Can you deny your guilt any longer?

Sir John. That villain, Robert, has betrayed me.—If you will but have patience, this matter shall be explained.

Lady R. Explained, sir?

Sir John. Yes my dear, explained, and——

Lady R. My dear too—the assurance of you!

Sir John. I say, my dear, for I still regard you; and this was all done to—to—cure you of your jealousy:—all done to cure you of your jealousy.

Lady R. A fine way you have taken!

Sir John. Yes, yes; all to convince you how groundless your suspicions are; and then we shall live very happy together.

Lady R. Ay!—and do you think to deny every thing, even in the face of conviction?—Base, base man!——I'll go this moment and write to my brother.

Sir John. Now you talk wildly. This is all raving;—you make yourself very ridiculous; you do indeed. I had settled all this on purpose, and contrived that it should come to your ears, and then I knew you would do just as you have done;—and—then—I—I resolved to do just as I have done;—only to hint to you that listeners seldom hear any good of themselves; and to show you how wrong it is to be

too suspicious, my dear. Was it not well done?—
Ha, ha, ha!

Lady R. And do you laugh at me too, sir? Make me your sport? I'll go and get pen and ink this moment.

Sir John. Oh! do so, ma'am; do so—ha! ha! you'll only expose yourself: go and write, madam—ha! ha! ha!—

Lady R. I will, sir. [*Going.*] The door is locked. This won't succeed, sir. I suppose you have the key. Ay! I'll lay my life you have, and some one or other of your creatures is locked in there.

Sir John. There, again! This is of a piece with all your vain surmises. Ha! ha! you are mighty silly, indeed you are.

Lady R. I will search that closet. I am determined I will.

Sir John. Do so, ma'am, do so. Ha! ha! I can't but laugh at her.

Lady R. I'll have the door broke open, if you won't give me the key.

Sir John. Ha! ha! ha!—How you expose yourself!

Lady R. Will you give me the key, sir?

Sir John. Ha! ha! ha! it is too ridiculous!

Lady R. Mighty well, sir. Tattle!—who waits there? I will find out all your artifices. Tattle, I say!

Enter TATTLE.

Do you know any thing of the key of that closet, Tattle?

Tat. The key, ma'am! I have it, ma'am.

Lady R. Give it to me.

Tat. That is, I have it not, ma'am. Don't have it, ma'am, don't ask for it. [*Aside to her.*

Lady R. Don't ask for it! but I will have it. Give me the key this instant.

Sir John. How! is she not willing to give it? There is something in this, then. Give the key this moment, you jade, give it to me.

Lady R. You shan't have it, sir. What, you want to hinder me! give the key to me.

Tat. Dear heart! I have lost it, ma'am. Better not have it ma'am. [Aside.]

Sir John. Give it to me this moment, I say.

Tat. The devil is in it! there it is then. Let me make my escape. [Exit.]

Lady R. Now, sir, we shall see who you have.

Sir John. Ay, now search if you will.

[Laughing at her.]

Lady R. [Unlocking the door.] You shall be found out, I promise you—Oh! [Screams.]

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Madam—— [Bows to her.]

Sir John. By all that's false, here he is again!

Lady R. What, in the name of wonder, brings you here, sir?

Sir John. Oh, madam! you know his business, and I know his business; and the gentleman knows his business. There he is, ma'am! there is the gentleman waiting for you; true to his appointment, you see. Sir, your humble servant. My Lady Restless, your humble servant. Is the case plain now?

Lady R. I am in amaze! I don't know what to make of this.

Bev. Sir, however odd this may appear——

Sir John. Ay! now settle it between yourselves: give it what turn you will, sir, she will confirm it. You need not be afraid, sir; you will agree in your story; she is quick of invention, and I dare say you are pretty quick too!

Bev. Sir, I must beg you will put no forced construction upon this matter.

Sir John. And you beg the same, ma'am, don't you?

Bev. Sir, I beg to be heard. My business here is to desire you will return me the picture which you have in your possession! it is now become dear to me, sir.

Sir John. I dare say it is.

Bev. And must be returned.

Sir John. It is of equal value to me. It shall rise in evidence against you both.

Lady R. Evidence against me! explain yourself. How did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Sir John. Ay, sir, speak; how did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Bev. Vexation! I'm beset by them both at once.

Sir John. Ay, sir, explain.

Bev. Sir, if you will give me leave, I will satisfy you entirely. I assure you sir, and you too, ma'am, that the liberty I have taken with your closet is entirely owing to your maid, Tattle.

Sir John. The jade! I don't doubt it, sir.

Bev. To prevent, if possible, the interpretation now put upon seeing me in this house.

Sir John. And it was well contrived, sir. Oh, my Lady Restless!

Lady R. By all that's just, I knew nothing of it.

Bev. Nothing, upon my honour, sir.

Sir John. Oh! I knew you would both agree.

Bev. As I am a gentleman, I tell you the real fact.

Sir John. You need not, sir: I know the real fact.

Bev. I have no time to lose in frivolous altercation: I must now desire the picture, directly.

Sir John. I wish you a good evening.

Bev. I shall not stir without it, I should be glad you would comply without a quarrel. I must be obliged to—

Sir John. Ay, now her prize-fighter begins. [*Aside.*] I desire you will quit my house, sir.

Bev. I am not to be trifled with. If you don't return it by fair means, I shall be forced to draw.

Sir John. There again now! she has set him on to cut my throat: But I will disappoint her. She is a worthless woman, and I won't fight about her. There, sir, there is your trinket. I shall have proof sufficient without it.

Bev. Upon my honour, sir, you will have no proof of any transgression of mine. If you suspect your lady from these appearances, you wrong her much, I assure you.

Lady R. Sir, I desire you will explain all this.

Bev. Call up your maid, madam, and then——

Sir John. No, sir, no more of it. I am satisfied. I wish you good night.

Bev. When you are willing to listen to reason, I shall be ready to convince you of your error. Madam, you may depend I shall do justice to your honour upon all occasions. And now I take my leave.
[*Exit.*]

Sir John. Now, my Lady Restless, now! you are thoroughly known! all your artifices are known; Mr. Beverley is known; my Lord Conquest is known.

Lady R. My Lord Conquest, sir! I despise all your imputations. My Lord Conquest's maid, sir! what can you say to that?

Sir John. Very well, madam! 'tis now my turn to write to your brother, and I promise you I will do it.

Lady R. You will write, sir! you will write! ha! ha! you make yourself very ridiculous, you do indeed!—ha! ha!

Sir John. 'Sdeath! madam, am I to be insulted with a contumelious laugh into the bargain!

Lady R. Why, my dear, this was all done—to—to to—cure you of your jealousy; for I knew you would

act as you have done, and so I resolved to do as I have done.—Was it not well done, my dear?—Ha, ha!

Sir John. Damnation! this is too much, it is beyond all patience.

Lady R. Ha! ha! ha! the tables are turned, I think. *[Sings and laughs.]*

Sir John. Let me tell you it is no laughing matter. You are a vile woman; I know you, and the world shall know you: I promise you it shall.

Lady R. I am clear in my own conviction, and your slander I despise; nor shall your artifices blind me or my friends any longer. Sir, as you say, it is no laughing matter. I promise you, you shall never dishonour me again in this house.

Sir John. And I promise you, madam, that you shall never dishonour me again in any house.

Lady R. Injurious false, perfidious man!

Sir John. Deceitful, wanton! wanton woman!

[Exeunt at opposite doors.]

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MR. BLANDFORD'S.

Enter BELINDA.

Belin. Ungenerous, false, deceitful Beverley! under that fair appearance, could I imagine that he harbour-

ed so much treachery?—Attached to Lady Restless; engaged in a dishonourable intrigue with the wife of another, and yet professing an affection for me, with ardour professing it, and for me only!—He is likely to regard the honour of the marriage bed, who is ready to commit a trespass on the happiness of his neighbour. It was Providence sent Sir John Restless to pay me a visit. The whole is now brought to light, and Mr. Beverley, I have done with you for ever!—I shall now obey my father's commands. By giving my hand to Sir William Bellmont's son, I shall punish an undeserving libertine for his treachery.

Enter TIPPET.

Well, Tippet, have you done as I ordered you?

Tip. I have, madam.

Belin. The perfidious man!—Did you ever know such behaviour?

Tip. He is a traitor, like the rest of them.

Belin. After all the regard I professed for him!—after so many ardent vows and protestations as he has made me!

Tip. The hours that he has sighed away at your feet!

Belin. I will banish him from my thoughts.—My resolution is fixed, and so I have told my father.—Is Sir William Bellmont with him?

Tip. He is, ma'am: they are both in close talk.—They are over their glass, and are so overjoyed at the change of your mind!

Belin. And I applaud myself for what I have done.—O, Mr. Beverley! you have forced me to this extremity.—Here, take this letter, Tippet, and give it to him with your own hands.

Tip. He shall have it.

[Takes the Letter.]

Belin. Where are all his letters?

Tip. Here, ma'am.

[Shows a Parcel.]

Belin. The bracelets, and the pocket book ?

Tip. I have them safe.

Belin. Very well : take his presents home to him ; and, do you hear ? bring me back all the foolish letters I writ to him.

Tip. Never doubt me : I won't quit the house without them.—Exchange is all fair.

Belin. That letter will tell him, that though I now break with him, in a manner, that may seem abrupt, his character and conduct has compelled me to it.—Be sure you confirm that to him.

Tip. He shall hear it all, and roundly too.

Belin. Very well ; you may go.—Tippet,—ask his man—as if from yourself, carelessly, as it were by accident,—whether his master has talked of me ? And what he said, Tippet.

Tip. I know Mr. Brush ; I can wheedle it out of him, I warrant me.

Belin. Get at the particulars ;—not that I care ;—I don't want to know any thing about the ungrateful man.—It does not concern me now. My foolish weakness is over ;—let him care as little for me as I do for him. You may tell him so.

Tip. Your message shan't lose in the carrying.

Belin. Well, that's all :—you may begone.

Tip. Yes, ma'am.

[Going.

Belin. Mind what I have said.

Tip. You may trust me.

[Going.

Belin. Don't forget a word of it.

Tip. No, not a syllable.

[Going.

Belin. And, harkye ;—tell him how easy, how composed I am. That will gall him. You see, Tippet, I am quite unconcerned.

[Forcing a Smile.

Tip. Yes, ma'am ; you don't seem to fret in the least.

Belin. It is easy to perceive that I am not at all disconcerted. You may see how gay I am upon the occasion.

[Affecting to laugh

Tip. [*Laughing.*] O, yes, ma'am ; you make quite a laughing matter of it.

Belin. Very true ; a perfect air of indifference !—Well, I have done.—Tell him, that upon no account will I ever exchange a word with him ;—that I will never hear of him ;—never think of him ;—never see him ;—and never, upon any consideration, admit the smallest intercourse ;—no, never !—I will have no more to do with him.

Tip. I have my lesson, ma'am, and I am glad you are so resolved upon it. [*Going.*]

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Beverley, madam.

Tip. You must not let him up stairs :—my lady will never see his face.

Serv. Not see Mr. Beverley !

Belin. Don't be in a passion, Tippet.—Whom did you say, Thomas ?

Serv. Mr. Beverley, madam.

Belin. Yes, I think I may see him ; show him up. [*Exit SERVANT.*]——I will see him once more, and tell him all myself. It will come better from me, Tippet.

Tip. Yes, ma'am, you will do it with a better grace ; and your resolution will melt away like a bit of sugar in your mouth.

Belin. My resolution is not to be altered : you may withdraw, Tippet.

Tip. Yes, ma'am.——Ah ! she has a hankering after him still. [*Exit.*]

Belin. I shall now take my leave of him.—But then, my friend Clarissa ! can I rob her of her lover ?—She has not deserved it at my hands. Though Mr. Beverley has deceived me, must I be false to honour, and to friendship ?

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. Belinda ! how gladly do I once again behold——

Belin. And with what resentment have not I reason to behold, sir——

Bev. You have, Belinda; you have reason, I grant it :—forgive the rash words my folly uttered.

Belin. Mistake me not, sir :—it is not your words I quarrel with; your actions, Mr. Beverley, your actions, sir !

Bev. They are not to be extenuated : but surely, after the letter you honoured me with——

Belin. Sir, I have heard every thing since I was guilty of that folly.

Bev. Heard !—what !

Belin. Dissemble if you will ; but this must be the last of our conversing together. My maid will return you whatever I have received from you : all my silly letters I must desire you to deliver to her ; and then visit me no more, sir.

Bev. Belinda !—you will not wound me thus. Here is the picture which caused that unlucky mistake between us. I have recovered it from Sir John Restless.

Belin. From my Lady Restless, sir ?

Bev. Madam !

Belin. Oh ! fie, sir : no more ; I have done.

Bev. You must, you must accept it. Thus on my knees I beg you. Will you, Belinda ?

[Takes her Hand.

Belin. Leave me, sir : let go my hand, Mr. Beverley : your falsehood——

Bev. My falsehood ! By all the——

Belin. Your falsehood, sir : Sir John Restless has told me all ; every circumstance.

Bev. He has told you ! what has he told ? His life shall answer it.

Belin. You have destroyed my peace of mind for ever. Nay, you yourself have forced me into the arms of another.

Bev. What do I hear?

Belin. My Lady Restless will rejoice at the news: the event will not be displeasing to her; but she is welcome: let her enjoy her triumph.

Bev. You astonish me, Belinda: what does all this mean?

Belin. It means, that, in obedience to the commands of a father, I have agreed to marry Mr. Bellmont.

Bev. Mr. Bellmont?—him!—marry him! it is very well, ma'am: I expected it would come to this; and my Lady Restless is only mentioned on this occasion, as a retort for my accusation about Sir John. I understand it; and, by Heaven! I believe that whole story.

Belin. You do, sir!

Bev. I do: fool that I was to humble myself to you. My pride is now piqued, and I am glad, madam, as glad as you can be, to break off for ever.

Belin. O, sir, I can be as indifferent on my part—You have only to send me back my letters, and——

Bev. Agreed! agreed!—I'll go home this moment, and send them all.—Before I go, madam, here is your own picture, which you had given me with your own hands. Mr. Bellmont will be glad of it;—or Sir John Restless will be glad of it;—or any body will be glad of it;—you need not be at a loss.

Belin. Very like, sir. [*Takes the Picture.*] Tyrant, tyrant man! to treat me in this manner! [*Cries.*

Bev. Tears! Belinda! [*Approaching.*] Belinda!

Belin. No more of your insidious arts—I will hear no more.—Oh! my heart, my heart will break! I did not think it was in your nature to behave as you have done;—but—farewell, for ever! [*Exit.*

Bev. Belinda! hear me but speak. By Heaven, my

Lady Restless——She is gone; 'sdeath, I have been duped by her all this time!—I will now summon up all that is man within me, and, in my turn, despise her.

Enter TIPPET.

Tip. If you are going home, sir, I will take the things with me now.

Bev. Yes, I am going;——I will leave this detested——

Tip. This abominable place, sir.

[Laughing at him.

Bev. This hell!

Tip. Ha, ha!—Ay, sir, this hell.

Bev. This mansion of perfidy, ingratitude, and fraud!

Tip. Very right, sir, let us go.

Bev. And yet——Tippet, you must not stir.—Indulge me but a little.—It is all a misunderstanding, this.

Tip. My lady will have no more to say to you.—You may take the things, sir; my lady resigns them to you, sir.

Bev. O, Tippet! use your interest with her. Keep them in the house till I return. I will clear up this whole matter presently.—I must not lose her thus.

[Exit.

Tip. Poor gentleman! he seems in a lamentable way.—Well, I fancy, for my part, he is a true lover after all, that's what I do; and my young lady, I fear, is——

Enter BELINDA.

Madam, madam, madam, you are to blame; you are, indeed.

Belin. Is he gone?

Tip. He is, ma'am.

Belin. Quite gone?

Tip. Yes.

Belin. An abominable man, not to stay—did he say any thing?—Was he uneasy?—Or did he carry it off with a——

Tip. O, madam! he went away, sighing short, his heart throbbing, his eyes brimfull, his looks pale. You are to blame, you are indeed, madam.—I dare be sworn, he has never proved false.

Belin. O, Tippet, could I be sure of that!

Tip. But you are not sure of the contrary.—Why won't you see my Lady Restless? See her directly, madam; go to her now, before it is too late;—before the old folks, who are putting their heads together, have settled the whole affair.—Dear ma'am, be advised.—I hear them coming.—They will hurry you into a match, and you'll repent of it.—How cruel this is!—Here they come.—No, it's madam Clarissa.

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. So, Belinda, you have thrown things into fine confusion. You have involved yourself, and my brother, and Mr. Bellmont, and every body, in most terrible difficulties.

Belin. My dear Clarissa, here have been such doings between your brother and me!

Clar. So I find.—I met him as I came hither.—You have had fine doings, indeed. I have heard the whole;—my brother has told me every thing.

Tip. Madam, madam! I hear your father. Sir William Bellmont is with him:—they are coming up stairs.

Belin. I am not in a disposition to see them now.—Clarissa, suspend your judgment;—step with me to my own room, and I will then give you such reasons as, you will own yourself, sufficiently justify my conduct.

Clar. The reasons must be ingenious, that can make

any kind of apology for such behaviour. I shall be glad to hear you.

Belin. Very well, follow me quickly.—You will find that my resolution is not so rash as you imagine.

[Exit with CLARISSA.

Tip. They have got into a rare puzzle, and how they will get out of it, is beyond my dexterity ; and so let 'em manage as well as they can.

Enter BLANDFORD, SIR WILLIAM, and YOUNG BELLMONT.

Bland. Well, Sir William, we have made a good day's work of it:—the writings will be ready to-morrow morning.—Where is Belinda? I thought she was in this room.

Tip. She is gone to her own room, sir : she is not well.

Sir W. She has changed her mind, perhaps:—I shall have no faith in this business, till it is all concluded.

Bland. Changed her mind! say you? No, no; I can depend upon her. I'll bring her to you this moment, and you and your son shall hear a declaration of her mind out of her own lips.—Tippet, where is Belinda?

Tip. I'll show you the way, sir.

[Exit with BLANDFORD.

Sir W. Now we shall see what authority you have over your daughter.—I have your promise, George; if she consents, you will be ready to comply with the wishes of your father.

Bell. Sir, you may depend,—that is, as far as matters are in my power; but, you know, as I told you already, the lady has a settled, rooted aversion to me.

Sir W. Aversion!—she can change her mind, can't she? Women have no settled principle. They like

to-day, and dislike to morrow.—Besides, has not her father promised her to you in marriage?—If the old gentleman likes you, what have you to do with her aversion?

Bell. To do with it? A great deal, I am afraid. You are not now to learn, that, when a young lady marries against her inclination, billet-doux, assignations, plots, intrigues, and a terrible *et cætera* of female stratagem, mount into her brain, and the poor husband in the mean time—

Sir W. Come, lad, don't play the rogue with your father. Did not you promise me, if she made no objection, that there would be no obstacle on your part?

Bell. I promised to be sure, but yet I can't help thinking——

Sir W. And I can't help thinking that you know how to equivocate. Look you, George, your words were plain downright English, and I expect that you will perform to the very letter. I have fixed my heart upon this match. Mr. Blandford and I have passed the day at the Crown and Rolls, to read over the deeds. I have been dining upon parchment, as I may say. I now tell you once for all, you must be observant of my will and pleasure.

Bell. To end all dispute, sir, if the lady—[*Aside.*] She will never consent; I may safely promise.—If the lady, sir, can at once forget her engagements with my friend Beverley——

Sir W. You will then forget Clarissa: fairly spoken. Come, I am satisfied. And now, now we shall see.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Sir William, give me joy: every thing goes as I wish. My daughter is a complying girl. She is ready to obey my commands. Clarissa is with her,

beseccching, wrangling; complaining, soothing; now in a rage, and now in tears; one moment expostulating, and the next imploring; but all in vain; Belinda holds her resolution; and so, young gentleman, you are now completely happy.

Bell. Death to my hopes! can this be true?

[*Aside.*

Bland. Sir William, give me your hand upon it. This will not only be a match of prudence, but of inclination.

Sir W. There, George, there is news for you: your business is done.

Bland. She owns very frankly that her heart has been hitherto fixed upon a worthless man: she renounces him for ever, and is willing to give her hand as I shall direct.

Bell. What a dilemma am I brought into! [*Aside.*

Sir W. George, what's the matter, boy? You a bridegroom! Wounds! at your age I could cut a caper over the moon upon such an occasion.

Bell. I am more slack-mettled, sir: I cannot leap quite so high.

Sir W. A cup too low, I fancy. Let us go and finish our bottle. Belinda shall be my toast. I'll give you her health in a bumper. Come, Mr. Blandford: I want to wash down the cobwebs of the law.

[*Exit.*

Bland. I attend you, Sir William.—Mr. Bellmont, follow us: we must have your company: you are under par: come, we will raise you a note higher.

[*Exit.*

Bell. You have sunk me so low, that I shall never recover myself. This behaviour of Belinda's!——Can she think her treachery to one lover will recommend her to another?

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. Mr. Bellmont, I wish you joy, sir. Belinda

has consented ; and you have done the same. You are both consenting. The match is a very proper one. You will be finely paired.

Bell. You are misinformed, Clarissa ; why will you do me this injustice ?

Clar. Injustice ! Mr. Blandford has reported every thing : he has done you justice : he has told us how easily you have been persuaded : don't imagine that I am hurt. I resign all pretensions : I can be prevailed upon with as much ease as you, sir : I can copy the easy compliance of Mr. Bellmont.

Bell. If you will but hear me : moderate your anger.

Clar. Anger !—anger indeed ! I should be sorry any thing that has happened were of consequence enough to disturb my peace of mind.—Anger !—I shall die with laughing at the thought. You may be false to your friends, sir ; false to your vows ; you may break every solemn engagement ; Mr. Blandford wishes it ; Belinda wishes it ; and why should not you comply ? Follow the dictates of your heart, sir.

Bell. Whatever has happened, Clarissa, I am not to blame.

Clar. I dare say not : and here is a lady will say the same.

Enter BELINDA.

Belin. Spare your reproaches, Clarissa.—Mr. Bellmont, you too may spare me. The agitations of my mind distress me so, I know not which way to turn myself. The provocation I have had——

Clar. Provocation, madam !—from whom ?

Belin. From your brother : you need not question me ; you know what his conduct has been.

Bell. By Heaven, you wrong him ; and so you will find in the end.

Clar. Your own conduct, madam ! will that stand as clear as my brother's ?—My Lady Restless, I be-

lieve, has something to say. It will become you to refute that charge.

Belin. Downright malice, my dear: but I excuse you for the present.

Enter TIPPET.

Tip. [To BELINDA.] Your chair is ready, ma'am.

Belin. Very well: I have not a moment to lose: I am determined to know the bottom of this whole affair. Clarissa, when I return, you will be better disposed to hear me.

Clar. You need not trouble yourself, ma'am: I am perfectly satisfied.—Tippet, will you be so good as to order my chair?

Belin. Well; suspend your judgment. This business is of importance: I must leave you now.

[Exit with TIPPET.

Bell. Clarissa, if you knew how all this wounds me to the heart.

Clar. Oh! keep your resolution; go on with your very honourable design: inclination should be consulted! and the necessity of the case, you know, will excuse you to the world.

Bell. Command your temper, and the whole shall be explained.

Clar. It wants no explanation: it is too clear already.

Bell. A moment's patience would set every thing right.—'Sdeath! one would imagine that Lady Restless had been speaking to you too. This is like the rest of them: downright jealousy!

Clar. Jealousy!—Upon my word, sir, you are of great consequence to yourself: but you shall find that I can with perfect serenity banish you, and your Belinda, entirely from my thoughts.

Enter TIPPET.

Tip. The chairmen are in the hall, ma'am.

Bell. Let me but speak to you.

Clar. No, sir: I have done: I shall quit this house immediately. [*Going.*] Mrs. Tippet, could you let me have pen, ink, and paper, in your lady's room?

Tip. Every thing is ready there, ma'am.

Clar. Very well:—I'll go and write a letter to Belinda. I'll tell her my mind, and then adieu to all of you. [*Exit with TIPPET.*

Bell. How perverse and obstinate!

Enter SIR WILLIAM.

Sir W. Well, George, every thing is settled.

Bell. Why really, sir, I don't know what to say. I wish you would consider——

Sir W. At your tricks again?

Bell. I am above an attempt to deceive you: but if all circumstances were known—I am not fond of speaking detractingly of a young lady; but for the honour of your family, sir, let us desist from this match.

Sir W. Roguery, lad; there's roguery in this.

Bell. I see you will force me to speak out. If there is, unhappily, a flaw in Belinda's reputation——

Sir W. How?

Bell. This is no time to dissemble. In short, sir, my Lady Restless, a worthy lady here in the neighbourhood, has discovered a connexion between her and Sir John Restless; Sir John and Lady Restless lived in perfect harmony till this affair broke out. The peace of the family is now destroyed. The whole is come to the knowledge of my friend Beverley: with tears in his eyes, with a bleeding heart (for he loved Belinda tenderly), he has at last mustered up resolution, and taken his final leave.

Sir W. Ay! can this be true.

Bell. It is but too true; I am sorry to report it. And now, sir, judge yourself.—Oh!—here comes Mr. Blandford: 'tis a dreadful scene to open to him; a terrible story for the ear of a father! You had best take no notice: we need not be accessory to a young lady's ruin: it is a family affair, and we may leave them to patch it up among themselves, as well as they can.

Sir W. If these things are so, why then the case is altered.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Hey! what's in the wind now? You two look as grave! what's come over you? for my part, my spirits are above proof with joy: I am in love with my daughter for her compliance, and I fancy I shall throw in an odd thousand more, to enliven the honey-moon.

Sir W. Mr. Blandford, we are rather in a hurry, I think. We had better not precipitate matters.

Bland. Nay, if you are for changing your mind—Look you, sir, my daughter shall not be trifled with. Where is she? Where is my girl? Who answers there?

Enter TIPPET.

Where's Belinda?

Tip. She is not gone far, sir: just stepp'd out upon a moment's business to Sir John Restless.

Sir W. Gone to Sir John Restless! [*Aside.*

Bell. You see, sir. [*To SIR WILLIAM.*

Bland. I did not think she knew Sir John.

Sir W. Yes, she knows him: she has been acquainted with him for some time past.

Bland. What freak has she got in her head? She

is not gone after her Mr. Beverley, I hope, Zookers ! this has an odd appearance. I don't like it ; I'll follow her this moment.

Sir W. You are right : I'll attend you.—Now, George, this will explain every thing. [*Aside.*] Come, Mr. Blandford, this may be an escape : young birds will wing their flight.

Bland. Well, well, say no more, we shall see how it is. Come, Sir William, it is but a step. [*Exit.*

Bell. [*To TIPPET.*] Where is Clarissa ?

Sir W. [*Looking back.*] What, loitering, George ?

Bell. I follow you, sir. [*Exit SIR WILLIAM.*] Clarissa is not gone, I hope.

Tip. Gone, sir !—she is writing, and crying, and wiping her eyes, and tearing her paper, and beginning again, and in such a piteous way.

Bell. I must see her : she must come with us. If Lady Restless persists in her story, who knows what turn this affair may take ? Come, Mrs. Tippet, show me the way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*The Hall in the House of SIR JOHN RESTLESS :
a loud Rap at the Door.*

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. What a hurry you are in there !—This is my lady, I suppose. Where can she have been ?—Now for more confusion. If she finds Madam Belinda with Sir John, we are all blown up again.

Sir John. [*Peeping in.*] Robert, Robert : is that your lady ?

Rob. Mercy on us ! She is coming, I believe, sir. [*Looks out.*] I see her chair ; it is my lady.

Sir John. Don't let her know that Belinda is in the house.

Rob. Not if I can help it. Trust to me, sir. [*Exit SIR JOHN.*] Here she comes. What has she been about?

A Chair is brought into the Hall.

Lady R. [*Coming out of the Chair.*] Is Sir John at home?

Rob. I fancy he is, my lady.

Lady R. Has any body been with him?

Rob. He has been all alone, writing letters in his study: he desired not to be interrupted.

Lady R. I shall not interrupt him, I promise him. You never will tell me any thing, Robert: I don't care who comes after him. To-morrow I shall quit this house, and then he may riot in licentious pleasure. If he asks for me, I am not well; I am gone to my own apartment: I hope to see no more of him. [*Going.*

Chair. Shall your ladyship want the chair any more to night?

Lady R. I don't know what I shall want. Leave the chair there: you may wait. [*Exit.*

Chair. Ay! always a waiting job.

[*Puts the Chair aside; Exeunt CHAIRMEN and ROBERT.*

Enter SIR JOHN and BELINDA.

Belin. If you will but permit me to say a word to her—

Sir John. Excuse me for the present: I beg you will.

Belin. A short interview with Lady Restless might clear up all my doubts. what objection can you have?

Sir John. A million of objections. You do not know the consequence of being seen in this house. She will interpret every thing her own way. I am unhappy, madam, while you stay.

Belin. There is more cruelty in your refusal than you can imagine. Mr. Beverley's character is in question: it is of the last importance to me to know the whole truth.

Sir John. You know it all, madam. Mr. Beverley's character is too clear. Proofs thicken, and grow stronger every hour. Since the visit I paid you this very day, I have made another discovery. I found him lurking here in my house.

Belin. Found him here, sir?

Sir John. Found him here. He was lying in ambush for another amorous meeting.

Belin. If there is no mistake in this business——

Sir John. Mistake? May I trust my own eyes? I saw him; I spoke to him; I taxed him with his guilt. He was concealed in her closet: does that amount to proof? Her maid Tattle stationed him there. My lady was privy to it: she favoured the stratagem. Are you satisfied now, madam?

Belin. The particulars of this discovery, Sir John, may convince me: tell me all, sir; you will oblige me.

Sir John. Inquire no more for the present. You will oblige me, madam. Robert shall see you safe home. I would not have my lady find us together: I think I hear her: no, no. In a day or two the particulars will be known to the wide world. Where is Robert?—He shall conduct you home. My peace and happiness require it.

Belin. My peace and happiness are destroyed for ever. If your story be true——

Sir John. It is too true: I wish you a good night. I am miserable while you are here.—Robert!

Belin. Deliver me! I am ruined. I hear my fa-

ther's voice! what brings him hither? I am undone if he finds me. Let me retire into that room.

Sir John. That room will not do: you will be seen there.

Belin. Can't I go up stairs? [Going.

Sir John. No; I am ruined if you go that way.—Hell and distraction!—My Lady Restless coming down! Here, madam, here; into that chair. You will be concealed there: nobody will suspect you.

Belin. Any where, sir: put me any where, to avoid this impending storm. [Goes into the Chair.

Sir John. [Shutting the Chair.] This is lucky. I am safe now. Let my lady come as soon as she will.

Enter LADY RESTLESS.

Lady R. I only wanted to say one word, sir.

Enter BLANDFORD.

Bland. Sir John, I am obliged to intrude: I am told my daughter is here.

Lady R. There! he has heard it all.

Bland. I have heard that Belinda came to your house: on what business I do not know. I hope, Sir John, that you do not harbour the girl, to disturb the peace and happiness of a father.

Sir John. That imputation,——

Lady R. He does harbour her.

Sir John. Mr. Blandford, I give you my honour——

Lady R. I know he does. He has ruined your daughter; he has injured you, sir, as well as me, in the most essential point.

Sir John. She raves; she is mad. If you listen to her——

Enter SIR WILLIAM and BEVERLEY.

Bland. I am glad you are come, Sir William. This is more than I expected.

Sir John. And more than I expected. There, madam, there is your favourite again !

Bev. My visit is public, sir. I come to demand, in the presence of this company, an explanation of the mischief you have done me.

Sir John. You need not be so public, sir. The closet is ready for you : Tattle will turn the key, and you will there be very safe.

Lady R. How can you persist in such a fallacy ? He knows, he perfectly well knows, it was an accident ; a mere blunder of the servant, entirely unknown to me.

Sir John. She was privy to the whole.

Bland. This is beside my purpose. I came hither in quest of my daughter : a father demands her. Is she here ? Is she in the house ?

Sir John. In this house, sir ? Our families never visited. I am not acquainted with her.

Lady R. He is acquainted with her. I saw him clasp her in his arms.

Bland. In his arms ! When ? Where ? Tell me all.

Lady R. Yes, now let him give an account of himself.

Sir John. When you have accounted for your actions, madam——

Lady R. Render an account to the lady's father, sir.

Bland. Yes, to her father. Account with me, sir. When and where was all this ?

Lady R. This very day ; at noon ; in the Park.

Bev. But in the eyes of the whole world : I know Belinda : I can acquit her.

Sir John. And I proclaim her innocence. We can both acquit her. [Goes up to BEVERLEY.]

Lady R. You are both in a plot : both combined.

Sir John. It was all harmless ; all inoffensive. Was not it, Mr. Beverley ?

Bev. Yes, all, all.

Lady R. All guilt; manifest, downright guilt.

Sir W. If you all talk together, we shall never understand.

Bev. I understand it all.—Mr. Blandford, you met Belinda in the Park this morning?

Bland. I did, sir.

Bev. You accosted her violently: the harshness of your language overpowered her spirits: she was ready to faint: Sir John was passing by: she was going to drop down: Sir John assisted her: that is the whole of the story. Injured as I am, I must do justice to Belinda's character. She may treat me with the caprice and pride of insolent beauty; but her virtue claims respect.

Sir John. There now; there! that is the whole of the story.

Lady R. The whole of the story! no, sir John: you shall suppress nothing: you could receive a picture from her.

Sir John. You, madam, could receive a picture; and you, Mr. Beverley, could present it.

Lady R. Mr. Beverley, you hear this!

Bev. I can justify you, madam. I gave your lady no picture, Sir John.

Sir John. She had it in her hand. I saw her print her kisses on it, and in that moment I seized it from her.

Bev. Belinda dropped it in the Park, when she was taken ill: I had just given it to her. Your lady found it there.

Lady R. I found it on that very spot.

Bev. There, sir; she found it.

Sir John. I found you locked up in her cabinet; concealed in private.

Lady R. But with no bad intent.

Sir John. With the worst intent.

Bev. Your jealousy, Sir John, has fixed an imputation upon me, who have not deserved it: and your

suspensions, madam, have fallen, like a blasting mildew, upon a lady, whose name was never before sullied by the breath of calumny.

Sir W. The affair is clear, as to your daughter, Mr. Blandford. I am satisfied, and now we need not intrude any longer upon this family.

Enter BELLMONT and CLARISSA.

Walk in, George : every thing is right : your fears may now go to rest.

Lady R. I shall not stay another night in this house. Time will explain every thing. Call my chairmen, there. Sir John has it his own way at present.

Enter CHAIRMEN.

You have settled this among yourselves. I shall now go to my brother. Sir John, I have no more to say at present. Hold up. [*Goes to the Chair.*]

Sir John. Let the chair alone. You shall not go : you shall not quit this house, till I consent.

[*Goes between her and the Chair.*]

Lady R. I say hold up.

Sir John. Let it alone.

Lady R. Very well, sir : I must be your prisoner, must I ?

Sir John. It is mine to command here. No loose escapes this night ; no assignations ; no intrigues to disgrace me.

Lady R. Such inhuman treatment ! I am glad there are witnesses of your behaviour. [*Walks away.*]

Bland. I am sorry to see all this confusion ; but since my daughter is not here——

Lady R. He knows where she is, and so you will find.

Sir John. [*Coming forward.*] Your daughter is innocent, sir, I give you my honour. Where should she be in this house ? Lady Restless has occasioned all

this mischief. She formed a story to palliate her own misconduct. To her various artifices you are a stranger; but in a few days you may depend——

Lady R. [*Aside as she goes towards the Chair.*] He shall find that I am not to be detained here.

[*Makes Signs to the CHAIRMEN, to hold up.*

Sir John. I say, gentlemen, you may depend that I have full proof, and in a little time every thing will——

[*The Chair is opened, and BELINDA comes out.*

Lady R. Who has proof now? There, there! in his house all the time!

Bland. What do I see?

Bev. Belinda here!

Sir W. So, so! there is something in it, I see.

Sir John. Distraction! this is unlucky.

Lady R. What say you now, Mr. Beverley?—Now, Mr. Blandford! there; ocular demonstration for you!

Sir W. George, take Clarissa as soon as you will. Mr. Blandford, you will excuse me, if I now decline any further treaty with you.

Bland. This abrupt behaviour, Sir William——

Sir W. I am satisfied, sir. I am resolved. Clarissa, you have my approbation: my son is at your service. Here, George, take her, and be happy.

Bell. [*Taking her Hand.*] To you, from this moment, I dedicate all my future days.

Bland. Very well: take your own way. I can still protect my daughter.

Bev. And she deserves your protection: my dear Belinda, explain all this: I know it is in your power.

Belin. This generous behaviour, sir, recalls me to new life. You, I am now convinced, have been accused by my Lady Restless without foundation. Whatever turn her ladyship's unhappy self-tormenting

fancy may give to my conduct, it may provoke a smile, but will excite no other passion.

Lady R. Mighty fine! what brought you to this house?

Belin. To be a witness of your folly, madam, and Sir John's into the bargain.

Bell. That I can vouch: Sir John can fill his mind with vain chimeras, with as apt a disposition as his lady. Beverley has been represented in the falsest colours——

Lady R. That I admit: Sir John invented the story.

Bev. And Belinda, madam, has been cruelly slandered by you.

Sir John. She has so: that I admit.

Belin. And my desire to see all this cleared up, brought me to this house, madam. Now you see what has made this confusion.

Lady R. Oh! I expected these airs. You may discuss the point where you please: I will hear no more upon the subject. [Exit.]

Bland. Madam, the subject must be settled. [Follows her.]

Sir John. You have a right to insist upon it: the whole shall be explained this moment. Sir William, you are a dispassionate man. Give us your assistance. [Exit.]

Sir W. With all my heart. George, you are no longer concerned in this business, and I am glad of it. [Exit with YOUNG BELLMONT.]

Clar. [To BEVERLEY.] Now, brother, now is your time: your difficulties are all removed. Sir John suspected you without reason: my Lady Restless did the same to Belinda: you are both in love, and now may do each other justice. I can satisfy my Lady Restless and your father. [Exit.]

Bev. I see, I see my rashness. [Aside.]

Belin. I have been terribly deceived. [*Aside.*

Bev. If she would but forgive my folly!

Belin. Why does not he open his mind to me? I can't speak first.

Bev. What apology can I make her?—Belinda!

Belin. Charming! he begins. [*Aside, and smiling.*

Bev. [*Approaching.*] Belinda!—no answer?—Belinda!

Belin. Mr. Beverley!— [*Smiles aside.*

Bev. Don't you think you have been very cruel to me, Belinda? [*Advancing towards her.*

Belin. Don't you think you have been barbarous to me? [*Without looking at him.*

Bev. I have: I grant it. Can you find in your heart to forgive me?

Belin. [*Without looking at him.*] You have kept me on the rack this whole day, and can you wonder that I feel myself unhappy?

Bev. I am to blame: I acknowledge it. If you knew how my own heart reproaches me, you would spare yourself the trouble. With tears in my eyes I now speak to you: I acknowledge all my errors.

Belin. [*Looking at him.*] Those are not tears, Mr. Beverley. [*Smiling.*

Bev. They are; you see that they are.

Belin. Ah! you men can command tears.

Bev. My life! my angel! [*Kisses her Hand.*] Do you forgive me?

Belin. No, I hate you. [*Looking pleased at him.*

Bev. Now, I don't believe that. [*Kisses her Cheek.*] Do you hate me, Belinda?

Belin. How could you let an extravagance of temper get the better of you? You know the sincerity of my affection. Oh, Mr. Beverley! was it not ungenerous?

Bev. It was; I own it; on my knees I own it.

Belin. [*Laughing.*] Oh! proud man! have I humbled you?—Since you submit to my will and plea-

sure, I think I can forgive you.—Beg my picture back this moment. *[Shows it to him.]*

Bev. *[Taking the Picture]* I shall adore it ever, and heal this breach with uninterrupted love.

Enter SIR JOHN, LADY RESTLESS, SIR WILLIAM, BLANDFORD, BELLMONT, and CLARISSA.

Sir John. *[Laughing.]* Why, yes; it is very clear. I can now laugh at my own folly, and my wife's too.

Lady R. There has been something of a mistake, I believe.

Bev. You see, Sir John, what your suspicions are come to. I never was within your doors before this day; nor should I, perhaps, have had the honour of speaking to your lady, had it not been for the misunderstanding your mutual jealousies occasioned between Belinda and me.

Bland. And your ladyship has been ingenious enough to work out of those whimsical circumstances a charge against my daughter. Ha! ha!

Sir John. It is ever her way, sir. I told you, my dear, that you would make yourself very ridiculous.

Lady R. I fancy, sir, you have not been behind hand with me. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir W. And now, Mr. Blandford, I think we may as well let the match go on as we at first intended.

Bland. No, no more of that: you have disposed of your son. Belinda, I no longer oppose your inclinations: take Mr. Beverley as soon as you will.

Sir John. Now, let us see: if she agrees to marry him, why, then, she knows he is innocent, and I shall be satisfied. *[Aside.]*

Belin. If you insist upon it, sir.

Bland. I do insist.

Lady R. If Beverley accepts of her, all my suspicions are at an end. *[Aside.]*

Bev. Thus let me take the bright reward of all my wishes. *[Takes her Hand.]*

Belin. Since it is over, you have used your authority, sir, to make me happy indeed. We have both seen our error, and frankly confess that we have both been in the wrong too.

Sir W. Why, we have been all in the wrong, I think.

Sir John. It has been a day of mistakes, but of fortunate ones, conducing at last to the advantage of all parties. My Lady Restless will now be taught—

Lady R. Sir John, I hope you will be taught—

Bland. Never mention what is past. The wrangling of married people, about unlucky questions that break out between them, is like the lashing of a top: it only serves to keep it up the longer.

Sir John. Very true: and since we have been ALL IN THE WRONG to-day, we will for the future, endeavour to be ALL IN THE RIGHT.

Bev. A fair proposal, Sir John; we will make it our business, both you, who are married, and we, who are now entering into that state, by mutual confidence to ensure mutual happiness.

The God of Love thinks we profane his fire,
When trifles light as air mistrust inspire.
But where esteem and gen'rous passions spring,
There reigns secure, and waves his purple wing;
Gives home-felt peace; prevents the nuptial strife;
Endears the bliss, and bids it last for life.

THE END.

It was the fifth day of the month, and the sun was shining brightly. The wind was fresh and cool, and the sea was calm. The ship was at anchor, and the crew were all at their posts. The captain was on the deck, looking out over the water. He was a man of middle age, with a white beard and a kind face. He was dressed in a blue coat and a white waistcoat. He was looking at the sea, and he was thinking of the day that was before him. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the land, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the people. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the sun, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the moon. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the stars, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the earth. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the world, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the life.

The ship was at anchor, and the crew were all at their posts. The captain was on the deck, looking out over the water. He was a man of middle age, with a white beard and a kind face. He was dressed in a blue coat and a white waistcoat. He was looking at the sea, and he was thinking of the day that was before him. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the land, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the people. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the sun, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the moon. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the stars, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the earth. He was thinking of the day when he had first seen the world, and he was thinking of the day when he had first seen the life.

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GRECIAN DAUGHTER



EUPHRASIA. — BEHOLD, ALL SICILY! BEHOLD!
THE POINT GLOWS WITH THE TYRANT'S BLOOD.

PAINTED BY R. COOK. PUBLISHED BY LONGMAN AND CO. ENGRAVED BY A. SMITH. A.

THE
GRECIAN DAUGHTER ;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS ;

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

CRITICAL REMARKS

This tragedy has been so universally applauded on the stage, and so severely criticised in the closet, that it is a task of peculiar difficulty to speak either of its beauties or its defects with any degree of certainty. The conclusion both the author and the reader, both the favourable and the unfavourable critic, the "German Dialectic" demands a list of Remarks for each side of the question—and the good-natured side shall have precedence.

The play that on the first appearance, the most brilliant success, and still holds a place in the list of dramas performed every season. There is a splendour of decoration, a glow of martial action, extent of such deep interest and above all a moral of such excellent tendency, which renders the performance, that its attraction can readily be accounted for without the slightest imputation upon the judgment of the public.

For many of all the events recorded in history, that this play, on which the table of this play is founded, may be classed among the most affecting. Yet it was one the most hazardous for a dramatist to adopt: for nothing less than complete skill could have given to this singular occurrence (actual fact) joined to be a dramatic effect. In this drama of Mr. Alf. Murphy has every thing that is great and noble.

WILLIAM SAVAGE, PRINTER,
BEDFORD BURY, LONDON.

REMARKS.

This tragedy has been so rapturously applauded on the stage, and so severely criticised in the closet, that it is a task of peculiar difficulty to speak either of its beauties or its defects, with any degree of certainty. To conciliate both the auditor and the reader, both the favourable and the unfavourable critic, the “Grecian Daughter” demands a set of Remarks for each side of the question—and the good-natured side shall have precedence.

This play had, on its first appearance, the most brilliant success, and still holds a place in the list of dramas performed during every season. There is a splendour of decoration, a glow of martial action, events of such deep interest, and, above all, a moral of such excellent tendency, which concludes the performance, that its attraction can readily be accounted for, without the slightest imputation upon the judgment of the public.

Perhaps, of all the events recorded in history, that filial piety, on which the fable of this play is founded, may be classed among the most affecting—yet it was one the most hazardous for a dramatist to adopt; for nothing less than complete skill could have given to this singular occurrence effectual force, joined to becoming delicacy. In this arduous effort Mr. Murphy has evinced the most exact judgment, and the nicest execution.

If this tragedy has not the smooth flowing verse of Otway, Thomson, or Rowe, it possesses, in energy and fire, charms more theatrical ; nor does the heroic so wholly engross every scene, but that it yields, at times, to melting pathos.

Another praise due to this production is, that wonderful events take place by the most natural agency. Incidents arise progressively from each other, till the last great incident of all, fills every mind with enthusiasm in the cause of virtue and justice—in the joy of an empire made free by the overthrow of its tyrant.

It is hardly possible to read this tragedy of the “Grecian Daughter,” without laughing as well as crying. Some passages excite tears, whilst certain high-sounding sentences, with meaning insignificant, are irresistibly risible.

The popular story, from which the fable of this tragedy is produced, and the surprising event in the last scene—where a woman performs that which a whole army has in vain attempted—together with the powerful acting of Mrs. Barry in the part of Euphrasia, rendered this play greatly attractive when it was first performed ; and as those causes of attraction still remain, or rather, an improvement is introduced by Mrs. Siddons’s appearance in the Grecian Daughter, the play is still of use to the theatre.

The men’s characters have been all sacrificed by the author to the valour of the woman—he has made his female do the deed of a man, and his best man perform the act of a child,

Though Evander ranks as the first male character in this play, no actor likes to appear in the part. He would rather be inferior, and less infirm.

As Mr. Murphy had much theatrical experience as well as taste, it is astonishing that the personage most talked of, most praised, and by far the most perfect character in the whole drama, should never make his appearance!

Timoleon is a great warrior and a good man; and it seems wonderful how the audience, on the first night of the play, would quit the theatre without seeing him. Yet it was but modesty and respect in the author, not to bring so magnanimous a hero on the scene, to speak bad poetry.

The great tragic dramatist, Otway, wrote miserable comedies: Let it be no disgrace to Murphy that he has written an indifferent tragedy. By the merit of his comic scenes, his tragic ones are perhaps judged, and in the comparison lose half their value.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DIONYSIUS
EVANDER
PHILOTAS
MELANTHON
PHOCION
ARCAS
GREEK HERALD
CALIPPUS
GREEK SOLDIER
OFFICER

EUPHRASIA
ERIXENE

Mr. Cory.
Mr. Kemble.
Mr. C. Kemble.
Mr. Hull.
Mr. Brunton.
Mr. Davenport.
Mr. Creswell.
Mr. Klanert.
Mr. Field.

Mrs. Siddons.
Mrs. Humphries.

SCENE,—Syracuse:

THE
GRECIAN DAUGHTER.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

Enter MELANTHON and PHILOTAS.

Mel. Yet, yet a moment ; hear, Philotas, hear me.

Phil. No more ; it must not be.

Mel. Obdurate man ;

Thus wilt thou spurn me, when a king distress'd,
A good, a virtuous, venerable king,
The father of his people, from a throne
Which long with ev'ry virtue he adorn'd,
Torn by a ruffian, by a tyrant's hand,
Groans in captivity ? In his own palace
Lives a sequester'd prisoner ? Oh ! Philotas,
If thou hast not renounc'd humanity ;
Let me behold my sovereign ; once again
Admit me to his presence ; let me see
My royal master.

Phil. Urge thy suit no further;
Thy words are fruitless; Dionysius' orders
Forbid access; he is our sov'reign now;
'Tis his to give the law, mine to obey.

Mel. Thou canst not mean it: his to give the law!
Detested spoiler!—his! a vile usurper!
Have we forgot the elder Dionysius,
Surnam'd the Tyrant? To Sicilia's throne
The monster waded through whole seas of blood.
Sore groan'd the land beneath his iron rod,
Till rous'd at length Evander came from Greece,
Like Freedom's Genius came, and sent the tyrant,
Stript of the crown, and to his humble rank
Once more reduc'd, to roam, for vile subsistence,
A wandering sophist through the realms of Greece.

Phil. Whate'er his right, to him in Syracuse
All bend the knee; his the supreme dominion,
And death and torment wait his sovereign nod.

Mel. But soon that pow'r shall cease: behold his
walls
Now close encircled by the Grecian bands;
Timoleon leads them on; indignant Corinth
Sends her avenger forth, array'd in terror,
To hurl ambition from a throne usurp'd,
And bid all Sicily resume her rights.

Phil. Thou wert a statesman once, Melanthon;
now,
Grown dim with age, thy eye pervades no more
The deep-laid schemes which Dionysius plans.
Know then, a fleet from Carthage even now
Stems the rough billow; and, ere yonder sun,
That now declining seeks the western wave,
Shall to the shades of night resign the world,
Thou'lt see the Punic sails in yonder bay,
Whose waters wash the walls of Syracuse.

Mel. Art thou a stranger to Timoleon's name?
Intent to plan, and circumspect to see
All possible events, he rushes on

Resistless in his course! Your boasted master
Scarce stands at bay; each hour the strong blockade
Hems him in closer, and ere long thou'lt view
Oppression's iron rod to fragments shiver'd!
The good Evander then——

Phil. Alas, Evander
Will ne'er behold the golden time you look for!

Mel. How! not behold it! Say, Philotas, speak;
Has the fell tyrant,—have his felon murderers——

Phil. As yet, my friend, Evander lives.

Mel. And yet
Thy dark half-hinted purpose—lead me to him;
If thou hast murder'd him——

Phil. By Heav'n, he lives.

Mel. Then bless me with one tender interview.
Thrice has the sun gone down, since last these eyes
Have seen the good old king; say, why is this?
Wherefore debarr'd his presence? Thee, Philotas,
The troops obey, that guard the royal pris'ner;
Each avenue to thee is open; thou
Canst grant admittance; let me, let me see him.

Phil. Entreat no more; the soul of Dionysius
Is ever wakeful; rent with all the pangs
That wait on conscious guilt.

Mel. But when dun night——

Phil. Alas! it cannot be: but mark my words.
Let Greece urge on her general assault.
Despatch some friend, who may o'erleap the walls,
And tell Timoleon, the good old Evander
Has liv'd three days, by Dionysius' order,
Lock'd up from ev'ry sustenance of nature,
And life, now wearied out, almost expires.

Mel. If any spark of virtue dwell within thee,
Lead me, Philotas, lead me to his prison.

Phil. The tyrant's jealous care hath mov'd him
thence.

Mel. Ha! mov'd him, say'st thou?

Phil. At the midnight hour,

Silent convey'd him up the steep ascent,
To where the elder Dionysius form'd,
On the sharp summit of the pointed rock,
Which overhangs the deep, a dungeon drear:
Cell within cell, a labyrinth of horror,
Deep cavern'd in the cliff, where many a wretch,
Unseen by mortal eye, has groan'd in anguish,
And died obscure, unpitied, and unknown.

Mel. Clandestine murderer! Yes, there's the scene
Of horrid massacre. Full oft I've walk'd,
When all things lay in sleep and darkness hush'd.
Yes, oft I've walk'd the lonely sullen beach,
And heard the mournful sound of many a corse
Plung'd from the rock into the wave beneath,
That murmurs on the shore. And means he thus
To end a monarch's life? Oh! grant my pray'r;
My timely succour may protect his days;
The guard is yours——

Phil. Forbear; thou plead'st in vain;
And though I feel soft pity throbbing here;
Though each emotion prompts the gen'rous deed,
I must not yield; it were assur'd destruction!
Farewell, despatch a message to the Greeks;
I'll to my station; now thou know'st the worst.

[*Exit.*]

Mel. Oh, lost Evander! Lost Euphrasia too!
How will her gentle nature bear the shock
Of a dear father, thus in ling'ring pangs
A prey to famine, like the veriest wretch
Whom the hard hand of misery hath grip'd!
In vain she'll rave, with impotence of sorrow;
Perhaps, provoke her fate: Greece arms in vain,
All's lost; Evander dies!

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. Where is the King?
Our troops, that sallied to attack the foe,

Retire disordered ; to the eastern gate
The Greeks pursue : Timoleon rides in blood !
Arm, arm, and meet their fury !

Mel. To the citadel
Direct thy footsteps ; Dionysius there
Marshals a chosen band.

Cal. Do thou call forth
Thy hardy veterans ; haste, or all is lost ! *[Exit.*
Warlike Music.

Mel. Now, ye just gods, now look propitious
down ;
Now give the Grecian sabre tenfold edge,
And save a virtuous king ! *[Warlike Music.*

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Eup. War on, ye heroes,
Ye great assertors of a monarch's cause !
Let the wild tempest rage. Melanthon, ha !
Did'st thou not hear the vast tremendous roar ?
Down tumbling from its base the eastern tow'r,
Burst on the tyrant's ranks, and on the plain
Lies an extended ruin.

Mel. Still new horrors
Increase each hour, and gather round our heads.

Eup. The glorious tumult lifts my tow'ring soul.
Once more, Melanthon, once again, my father
Shall mount Sicilia's throne.

Mel. Alas ! that hour
Would come with joy to ev'ry honest heart,
Would shed divinest blessings from its wing ;
But no such hour in all the round of time,
I fear, the fates averse will e'er lead on.

Eup. And still, Melanthon, still does pale despair
Depress thy spirit ? Lo ! Timoleon comes
Arm'd with the pow'r of Greece ; the brave, the just,
God-like Timoleon ! ardent to redress,
He guides the war, and gains upon his prey.

A little interval shall set the victor
Within our gates triumphant.

Mel. Still my fears
Forbode for thee. 'Would thou hadst left this place,
When hence your husband, the brave Phocion, fled,
Fled with your infant son!

Eup. In duty fixed,
Here I remain'd, while my brave, gen'rous Phocion,
Fled with my child, and from his mother's arms
Bore my sweet little one. Full well thou know'st
The pangs I suffer'd in that trying moment.
Did I not weep? Did I not rave and shriek,
And by the roots tear my dishevell'd hair?
Did I not follow to the sea-beat shore,
Resolv'd with him, and with my blooming boy,
To trust the winds and waves?

Mel. Deem not, Euphrasia,
I e'er can doubt thy constancy and love.

Eup. Melanthon, how I loved, the gods, who saw
Each secret image that my fancy form'd,
The gods can witness how I lov'd my Phocion,
And yet I went not with him. Could I do it?
Could I desert my father? Could I leave
The venerable man, who gave me being,
A victim here in Syracuse, nor stay
To watch his fate, to visit his affliction,
To cheer his prison hours, and with the tear
Of filial virtue bid ev'n bondage smile?

Mel. The pious act, whate'er the fates intend,
Shall merit heartfelt praise.

Eup. Yes, Phocion, go,
Go with my child, torn from this matron breast,
This breast that still should yield its nurture to him,
Fly with my infant to some happier shore,
If he be safe, Euphrasia dies content.
Till that sad close of all, the task be mine
To tend a father with delighted care,

To smooth the pillow of declining age,
See him sink gradual into mere decay,
On the last verge of life watch ev'ry look,
Explore each fond unutterable wish,
Catch his last breath, and close his eyes in peace.

Mel. I would not add to my afflictions; yet
My heart misgives; Evander's fatal period——

Eup. Still is far off; the gods have sent relief,
And once again I shall behold him king.

Mel. Alas! those glitt'ring hopes but lend a ray
To gild the clouds, that hover o'er your head,
Soon to rain sorrow down, and plunge you deeper
In black despair.

Eup. The spirit-stirring virtue,
That glows within me, ne'er shall know despair.
No, I will trust the gods. Desponding man!
Hast thou not heard with what resistless ardour
Timoleon drives the tumult of the war?
Hast thou not heard him thund'ring at our gates?
The tyrant's pent up in his last retreat;
Anon thou'lt see his battlements in dust,
His walls, his ramparts, and his tow'rs in ruin;
Destruction pouring in on ev'ry side,
Pride and oppression at their utmost need,
And nought to save him in his hopeless hour.

[*A flourish of Trumpets.*]

Mel. Ha! the fell tyrant comes.—Beguile his rage,
And o'er your sorrows cast a dawn of gladness.

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, OFFICERS, &c.

Dio. The vain presumptuous Greek! His hopes of
conquest,

Like a gay dream, are vanish'd into air.
Proudly elate, and flush'd with easy triumph
O'er vulgar warriors, to the gates of Syracuse
He urg'd the war, till Dionysius' arm
Let slaughter loose, and taught his dastard train
To seek their safety by inglorious flight.

Eup. O, Dionysius, if distracting fears
Alarm this throbbing bosom, you will pardon
A frail and tender sex. Should ruthless war
Roam through our streets, and riot here in blood,
Where shall the lost Euphrasia find a shelter?
In vain she'll kneel, and clasp the sacred altar.
O let me then, in mercy let me seek
The gloomy mansion, where my father dwells;
I die content, if in his arms I perish.

Dio. Thou lovely trembler, hush thy fears to rest,
The Greek recoils; like the impetuous surge
That dashes on the rock, there breaks, and foams,
And backward rolls into the sea again.
All shall be well in Syracuse: a fleet
Appears in view, and brings the chosen sons
Of Carthage. From the hill that fronts the main,
I saw their canvass swelling with the wind,
While on the purple wave the western sun
Glanc'd the remains of day.

Eup. Yet till the fury
Of war subside, the wild, the horrid interval
In safety let me sooth to dear delight
In a lov'd father's presence: from his sight,
For three long days, with specious feign'd excuse
Your guards debarr'd me. Oh! while yet he lives,
Indulge a daughter's love; worn out with age
Soon must he seal his eyes in endless night,
And with his converse charm my ear no more.

Dio. Why thus anticipate misfortune? Still
Evander mocks the injuries of time.
Calippus, thou survey the city round;
Station the centinels, that no surprise
Invade the unguarded works, while drowsy night
Weighs down the soldier's eye. Afflicted fair,
Thy couch invites thee. When the tumult's o'er,
Thou'lt see Evander with redoubled joy.
Though now unequal to the cares of empire
His age sequester him, yet honours high

Shall gild the ev'ning of his various day.

Eup. For this benignity accept my thanks.

They gush in tears, and my heart pours its tribute.

Dia. Perdiccas, ere the morn's revolving light

Unveil the face of things; do thou despatch

A well-oar'd galley to Hamilcar's fleet;

At the north point of yonder promontory,

Let some selected officer instruct him

To moor his ships, and issue on the land.

Then may Timoleon tremble: vengeance then

Shall overwhelm his camp, pursue his bands,

With fatal havoc, to the ocean's margin,

And cast their limbs to glut the vulture's famine,

In mingled heaps upon the naked shore.

[*Exit* DIONYSIUS.]

Eup. What do I hear? Melanthon, can it be?

If Carthage comes, if her perfidious sons

List in his cause, the dawn of freedom's gone.

Mel. Woe, bitt'rest woe, impends; thou wouldst
not think——

Eup. How? speak! unfold.

Mel. My tongue denies its office.

Eup. How is my father? Say, Melanthon——

Mel. He,

I fear to shock thee with the tale of horror!

Perhaps he dies this moment.—Since Timoleon

First form'd his lines round this beleagur'd city,

No nutriment has touch'd Evander's lips.

In the deep caverns of the rock imprison'd

He pines in bitterest want.

Eup. Well, my heart,

Well do your vital drops forget to flow.

Mel. Despair, alas! is all the sad resource
Our fate allows us now.

Eup. Yet, why despair?

Is that the tribute to a father due?

Blood is his due, Melanthon; yes, the blood,

The vile, black blood, that fills the tyrant's veins,

Would graceful look upon my dagger's point.
Come, vengeance, come, shake off the feeble sex,
Sinew my arm, and guide it to his heart.
And thou, O filial piety, that rul'st
My woman's breast, turn to vindictive rage;
Assume the port of justice; show mankind
Tyrannic guilt hath never dar'd in Syracuse,
Beyond the reach of virtue.

Mel. Moderate your zeal,
Nor let him hear these transports of the soul,
These wild upbraidings.

Eup. Shall Euphrasia's voice
Be hush'd to silence, when a father dies?
Shall not the monster hear his deeds accurst?
Shall he not tremble, when a daughter comes,
Wild with her griefs, and terrible with wrongs;
Fierce in despair, all nature in her cause
Alarm'd and rous'd with horror?
Melanthon come; my wrongs will lend me force;
The weakness of my sex is gone; this arm
Feels tenfold strength; this arm shall do a deed
For Heav'n and earth, for men and gods to wonder at!
This arm shall vindicate a father's cause.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

*A wild romantic Scene amidst overhanging Rocks; a
Cavern on one side.*

ARCAS, with a Spear in his Hand.

Arcas. The gloom of night sits heavy on the world;
And o'er the solemn scene such stillness reigns,

As 'twere a pause of nature ; on the beach
No murmuring billow breaks ; the Grecian tents
Lie sunk in sleep ; no gleaming fires are seen ;
All Syracuse is hush'd ; no stir abroad,
Save ever and anon the dashing oar,
That beats the sullen wave. And hark !—Was that
The groan of anguish from Evander's cell,
Piercing the midnight gloom ?—It is the sound
Of bustling prows, that cleave the briny deep.
Perhaps at this dead hour Hamilcar's fleet
Rides in the bay.

Enter PHILOTAS, from the Cavern.

Phil. What, ho ! brave Arcas ! ho !

Arcas. Why thus desert thy couch ?

Phil. Methought the sound
Of distant uproar chas'd affrighted sleep.

Arcas. At intervals the oar's resounding stroke
Comes echoing from the main. Save that report,
A death-like silence through the wide expanse
Broods o'er the dreary coast.

Phil. Do thou retire,
And seek repose ; the duty of thy watch
Is now perform'd ; I take thy post.

Arcas. How fares
Your royal pris'ner ?

Phil. Arcas, shall I own
A secret weakness ? My heart inward melts
To see that suffering virtue. On the earth,
The cold, damp earth, the royal victim lies ;
And while pale famine drinks his vital spirit,
He welcomes death, and smiles himself to rest.
Oh ! 'would I could relieve him !

Arcas. May no alarm disturb thee.

[*Exit.*

Phil. Some dread event is lab'ring into birth.
At close of day the sullen sky held forth
Unerring signals. With disastrous glare,
The moon's full orb rose crimson'd o'er with blood ;

And lo! athwart the gloom a falling star
 Trails a long tract of fire!—What daring step
 Sounds on the flinty rock? Stand there; what, ho!
 Speak, ere thou dar'st advance. Unfold thy purpose:
 Who and what art thou?

Eup. [*Within.*] Mine no hostile step;
 I bring no value to alarm thy fears:
 It is a friend approaches.

Phil. Ha! what mean
 Those plaintive notes?

Eup. [*Within.*] Here is no ambush'd Greek,
 No warrior to surprise thee on the watch.
 An humble suppliant comes—Alas, my strength
 Exhausted quite forsakes this weary frame.

Phil. What voice thus piercing thro' the gloom of
 night—
 What art thou? what thy errand? quickly say,
 Wherefore alarm'st thou thus our peaceful watch?

Eup. [*Within.*] Let no mistrust affright thee—

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Lo! a wretch,
 The veriest wretch that ever groan'd in anguish,
 Comes here to grovel on the earth before thee,
 To tell her sad, sad tale, implore thy aid,
 For sure the pow'r is thine, thou canst relieve
 My bleeding heart, and soften all my woes.

Phil. Euphrasia!——
 Why, princess, thus anticipate the dawn?
 Still sleep and silence wrap the weary world;
 The stars in mid career usurp the pole;
 The Grecian bands, the winds, the waves are hush'd;
 All things are mute around us; all but you
 Rest in oblivious slumber from their cares.

Eup. Yes; all, all rest: the very murd'rer sleeps;
 Guilt is at rest: I only wake to misery.

Phil. How didst thou gain the summit of the
 rock?

Enp. Give me my father ; here you hold him fet-
ter'd ;

Oh ! give him to me——If ever
The touch of nature throb'd within your breast,
Admit me to Evander. In these caves
I know he pines in want ; let me convey
Some charitable succour to a father.

Phil. Alas, Euphrasia ! 'would I dare comply !

Eup. It will be virtue in thee. Thou, like me,
Wert born in Greece :—Oh ! by our common pa-
rent—

Nay, stay ; thou shalt not fly ; Philotas, stay ;—
You have a father too ; think, were his lot
Hard as Evander's ; if by felon hands
Chain'd to the earth, with slow-consuming pangs
He felt sharp want, and with an asking eye
Implor'd relief, yet cruel men deny'd it,
Wouldst thou not burst thro' adamantine gates,
Thro' walls and rocks, to save him ? Think, Philotas,
Of thy own aged sire, and pity mine.
Think of the agonies a daughter feels,
When thus a parent wants the common food,
The bounteous hand of nature meant for all.

Phil. 'Twere best withdraw thee, princess ; thy as-
sistance

Evander wants not ; it is fruitless all ;
Thy tears, thy wild entreaties, are in vain.

Eup. Ha !—thou hast murder'd him ; he is no
more ;

I understand thee ;—butchers, you have shed
The precious drops of life.

Phil. Alas ! this frantic grief can nought avail.
Retire and seek the couch of balmy sleep,
In this dead hour, this season of repose.

Eup. And dost thou then, inhuman as thou art !
Advise a wretch like me to know repose ?
This is my last abode :—these caves, these rocks,

Shall ring for ever with Euphrasia's wrongs.
Here will I dwell, and rave, and shriek, and give
These scatter'd locks to all the passing winds;
Call on Evander lost;—
And cruel gods, and cruel stars invoking,
Stand on the cliff in madness and despair.

Phil. By Heav'n,
My heart in pity bleeds.
No other fear assails this warlike breast.
I pity your misfortunes; yes, by Heav'n,
My heart bleeds for you.—Gods! you've touch'd my
soul!

The gen'rous impulse is not giv'n in vain.
I feel thee, Nature, and I dare obey.
Oh! thou hast conquer'd.—Go, Euphrasia, go,
Behold thy father.

Eup. Raise me, raise me up;
I'll bathe thy hand with tears, thou gen'rous man!

Phil. Yet, mark my words; if aught of nourish-
ment

Thou wouldst convey, my partners of the watch
Will ne'er consent.

Eup. I will observe your orders:
On any terms, oh! let me, let me see him.

Phil. Yon lamp will guide thee thro' the cavern'd
way.

Eup. My heart runs o'er in thanks; the pious act
Timoleon shall reward; the bounteous gods,
And thy own virtues shall reward the deed.

[*Goes into the Cave.*]

Phil. Prevailing, powerful virtue!—Thou subdu'st
The stubborn heart, and mould'st it to thy purpose.
'Would I could save them!—But tho' not for me
The glorious pow'r to shelter innocence,
Yet for a moment to assuage its woes,
Is the best sympathy, the purest joy
Nature intended for the heart of man,
When thus she gave the social gen'rous tear. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

The Inside of the Cavern.

Enter ARCAS and EUPHRASIA.

Arcas. No ; on my life, I dare not.

Eup. But a small,
A wretched pittance ; one poor cordial drop
To renovate exhausted drooping age,
I ask no more.

Arcas. Not the smallest store
Of scanty nourishment must pass these walls.
Our lives were forfeit else : a moment's parley
Is all I grant ; in yonder cave he lies.

Eva. [*Within the Cell.*] Oh, struggling nature ! let
thy conflict end.

Oh ! give me, give me rest.

Eup. My father's voice !
It pierces here ! it cleaves my very heart.
I shall expire, and never see him more.

Arcas. Repose thee, princess, here, [*Draws a Couch*]
here rest thy limbs,
Till the returning blood shall lend thee firmness.

Eup. The caves, the rocks, re-echo to his groans !
And is there no relief ?

Arcas. All I can grant,
You shall command. I will unbar the dungeon,
Unloose the chain that binds him to the rock,
And leave your interview without restraint.

[*Opens a Cell in the back Scene.*]

Eup. Hold, hold my heart ! Oh ! how shall I sustain
The agonizing scene ? [*Rises.*] I must behold him ;
Nature, that drives me on, will lend me force.
Is that my father ?

Arcas. Take your last farewell.

His vigour seems not yet exhausted quite.

You must be brief, or ruin will ensue. *[Exit.]*

Eva. *[Raising himself.]* Oh! when shall I get free?

—These ling'ring pangs—

Eup. Behold, ye pow'rs, that spectacle of woe!

Eva. Despatch me, pitying gods, and save my child!
I burn, I burn; alas! no place of rest:

[Rises and comes out.]

A little air; once more a breath of air;

Alas! I faint; I die.

Eup. Heart-piercing sight!

Let me support you, sir.

Eva. Oh! lend your arm.

Whoe'er thou art, I thank thee: that kind breeze

Comes gently o'er my senses—lead me forward:

And is there left one charitable hand

To reach its succour to a wretch like me?

Eup. Well may'st thou ask it. O! my breaking
heart!

The hand of death is on him.

Eva. Still a little,

A little onward to the air conduct me;

'Tis well;—I thank thee; thou art kind and good,

And much I wonder at this gen'rous pity.

Eup. Dost thou not know me, sir?

Eva. Methinks I know

That voice: art thou—alas! my eyes are dim!

Each object swims before me—No, in truth

I do not know thee.

Eup. Not your own Euphrasia?

Eva. Art thou my daughter?

Eup. Oh! my honour'd sire!

Eva. My daughter, my Euphrasia? come to close
A father's eyes! Giv'n to my last embrace!

Gods! do I hold her once again? Your mercies

Are without number.

[Falls on the Couch.]

This excess of bliss

O'erpow'rs; it kills; Euphrasia—could I hope it?

I die content—Art thou indeed my daughter?
Thou art; my hand is moisten'd with thy tears:
I pray you do not weep—thou art my child:
I thank you, gods! in my last dying moments
You have not left me—I would pour my praise;
But oh! your goodness overcomes me quite!
You read my heart; you see what passes there.

Eup. Alas, he faints! the gushing tide of transport
Bears down each feeble sense: restore him, Heaven!

Eva. All, my Euphrasia, all will soon be well.
Pass but a moment, and this busy globe,
Its thrones, its empires, and its bustling millions,
Will seem a speck in the great void of space.
Yet, while I stay, thou darling of my age!—
Nay, dry those tears.

Eup. I will, my father.

Eva. Where,—

I fear to ask it, where is virtuous Phocion?

Eup. Fled from the tyrant's pow'r.

Eva. And left thee here

Expos'd and helpless?

Eup. He is all truth and honour:
He fled to save my child.

Eva. My young Evander!
Your boy is safe, Euphrasia?—Oh! my heart!
Alas! quite gone; worn out with misery;
Oh! weak, decay'd old man!

Eup. Inhuman wretches!
Will none relieve his want? A drop of water
Might save his life; and even that's deny'd him.

Eva. These strong emotions—Oh! that eager air—
It is too much—assist me; bear me hence;
And lay me down in peace.

Eup. His eyes are fix'd!
And those pale, quiv'ring lips! He clasps my hand:
What, no assistance! Monsters, will you thus
Let him expire in these weak, feeble arms?

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Those wild, those piercing shrieks will give
th'alarm.

Eup. Support him ; bear him hence ; 'tis all I ask.

Evan. [*As he is carried off.*] O Death ! where art
thou ? Death, thou dread of guilt,
Thou wish of innocence, affliction's friend,
Tir'd nature calls thee ; come, in mercy come,
And lay me pillow'd in eternal rest.
My child—where art thou ? give me ; reach thy hand,
Why dost thou weep ?—My eyes are dry—Alas !
Quite parch'd, my lips—quite parch'd, they cleave
together. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter ARCAS.

Arcas. The grey of morn breaks thro' yon eastern
clouds.

'Twere time this interview should end : the hour
Now warns Euphrasia hence • what man could dare,
I have indulg'd—Philotas !—ha ! the cell
Left void !—Evander gone !—What may this mean ?
Philotas, speak.

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Oh ! vile, detested lot,
Here to obey the savage tyrant's will,
And murder virtue that can thus behold
Its executioner, and smile upon him.
That piteous sight !

Arcas. She must withdraw, Philotas ;
Delay undoes us both. The restless main
Glows with the blush of day.
The time requires
Without or further pause, or vain excuse,
That she depart this moment.

Phil. Arcas, yes ;
My voice shall warn her of th' approaching danger.
[Exit.

Arcas. 'Would she had ne'er adventur'd to our guard !
I dread th' event ; and hark !—the wind conveys
In clearer sound the uproar of the main.
The fates prepare new havoc ; on th' event
Depends the fate of empire. Wherefore thus
Delays Euphrasia ? Ha ! what means, Philotas,
That sudden haste, that pale, disorder'd look ?

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. O ! I can hold no more ; at such a sight
Ev'n the hard heart of tyranny would melt
To infant softness. Arcas, go, behold
The pious fraud of charity and love ;
Behold that unexampled goodness ; see
Th' expedient sharp necessity has taught her ;
Thy heart will burn, will melt, will yearn to view
A child like her.

Arcas. Ha !—say what mystery
Wakes these emotions ?

Phil. Wonder-working virtue !
The father foster'd at his daughter's breast !
O ! filial piety !—The milk design'd
For her own offspring, on the parent's lip
Allays the parching fever.

Arcas. That device
Has she then form'd, eluding all our care,
To minister relief ?

Phil. On the bare earth
Evander lies ; and as his languid pow'rs
Imbibe with eager thirst the kind refreshment,
And his looks speak unutterable thanks,
Euphrasia views him with the tend'rest glance,
Ev'n as a mother doating on her child ;
And, ever and anon, amidst the smiles
Of pure delight, of exquisite sensation,

A silent tear steals down ; the tear of virtue,
That sweetens grief to rapture. All her laws
Inverted quite, great nature triumphs still.

Arcas. The tale unmans my soul.

Phil. Ye tyrants, hear it,
And learn, that, while your cruelty prepares
Unheard-of torture, virtue can keep pace
With your worst efforts, and can try new modes
To bid men grow enamour'd of her charms.

Arcas. Philotas, for Euphrasia, in her cause,
I now can hazard all. Let us preserve
Her father for her.

Phil. Oh ! her lovely daring
Transcends all praise. By Heav'n, he shall not die.

Arcas. And yet we must be wary ; I'll go forth,
And first explore each avenue around,
Lest the fix'd sentinel obstruct your purpose.

[Exit ARCAS.]

Phil. I thank thee, Arcas ; we will act like men
Who feel for other's woes—She leads him forth,
And tremblingly supports his drooping age.

[Goes to assist him.]

Enter EUPHRASIA and EVANDER.

Eva. Euphrasia, oh ! my child ! returning life
Glows here about my heart. Conduct me forward :
At the last gasp preserv'd ! Ha ! dawning light !
Let me behold ; in faith I see thee now ;
I do indeed : the father sees his child.

Eup. I have reliev'd him—Oh ! the joy's too
great ;
'Tis speechless rapture !

Eva. Blessings, blessings on thee !

Eup. My father still shall live. Alas ! Philotas,
Could I abandon that white hoary head,
That venerable form ? Abandon him
To perish here in misery and famine ?

Phil. Thy tears, thou miracle of goodness.

Have triumph'd o'er me.

Take him, take your father ;

Convey him hence ; I do release him to you.

Eva. What said Philotas ! Do I fondly dream ?

Indeed my senses are imperfect ; yet

Methought I heard him ! did he say release me ?

Phil. Thou art my king, and now no more my
pris'ner ;

Go with your daughter, with that wond'rous pattern
Of filial piety to after times.

Yes, princess, lead him forth ; I'll point the path,

Whose soft declivity will guide your steps

To the deep vale, which these o'erhanging rocks

Encompass round. You may convey him thence

To some safe shelter. Yet a moment's pause ;

I must conceal your flight from ev'ry eye.

Yes, I will save 'em, or perish in their cause.

[*Exit PHILOTAS.*]

Eva. Whither, oh ! whither shall Evander go ?

I'm at the goal of life ; if in the race

Honour has follow'd with no ling'ring step,

But there sits smiling with her laurel wreath,

To crown my brow, there would I fain make halt,

And not inglorious lay me down to rest.

Eup. And will you then refuse, when thus the gods
Afford a refuge to thee ?

Eva. Oh ! my child,

There is no refuge for me.

Eup. Pardon, sir :

Euphrasia's care has form'd a safe retreat ;

There may'st thou dwell ; it will not long be wanted.

Soon shall Timoleon with resistless force,

Burst yon devoted walls.

Eva. Timoleon !

Eup. Yes,

The brave Timoleon, with the pow'r of Greece ;

Another day shall make this city his.

Eva. Timoleon come to vindicate my rights !
Oh ! thou shalt reign in Sicily ! my child
Shall grace her father's throne. Indulgent Heaven !
Pour down your blessings on this best of daughters ;
To her and Phocion give Evander's crown ;
Let them, oh ! let them both in virtue wear it,
And in due time transmit it to their boy !

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. All things are apt ; the drowsy sentinel
Lies hush'd in sleep ; I'll marshall thee the way
Down the steep rock.

Eup. Oh ! let us quickly hence.

Eva. The blood but loiters in these frozen veins ;
Do you, whose youthful spirit glows with life,
Do you go forth, and leave this mould'ring corpse.
To me had Heav'n decreed a longer date,
It ne'er had suffer'd a fell monster's reign,
Nor let me see the carnage of my people.
Farewell, Euphrasia ; in one lov'd embrace
To these remains pay the last obsequies,
And leave me here to sink to silent dust.

Eup. And will you, then, on self destruction bent,
Reject my prayer, nor trust your fate with me.

Eva. Trust thee, Euphrasia ? Trust in thee, my
child ?

Though life's a burden I could well lay down,
Yet I will prize it, since bestow'd by thee.

Oh ! thou art good ; thy virtue soars a flight
For the wide world to wonder at ; in thee,
Hear it all nature, future ages hear it,
The father finds a parent in his child.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

*A Rampart near the Harbour.**Enter DIONYSIUS.**Dio.* Base deserters !

Curse on their Punic faith ! did they once dare
To grapple with the Greek ? Ere yet the main
Was ting'd with blood, they turn'd their ships averse.
May storms and tempests follow in their rear,
And dash their fleet upon the Lybian shore !

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. My liege, Timoleon, where the harbour opens,
Has storm'd the forts, and even now his fleet
Pursues its course, and steers athwart the bay.

Dio. Ruin impends ; and yet, if fall it must,
I bear a mind to meet it undismay'd,
Unconquer'd ev'n by Fate.

Cal. Through ev'ry street
Despair and terror fly. A panic spreads
From man to man, and superstition sees
Jove arm'd with thunder, and the gods against us.

Dio. With sacred rites their wrath must be appeas'd.

Let instant victims at the altar bleed :
Let incense roll its fragrant clouds to Heav'n,
And pious matrons, and the virgin train,
In slow procession to the temple bear
The image of their gods.
The solemn sacrifice, the virgin throng,
Will gain the popular belief, and kindle
In the fierce soldiery religious rage,

Away, my friends, prepare the sacred rites.

[*Exeunt* CALIPPUS, &c.]

Philotas, thou draw near : how fares your pris'ner ?
Has he yet breath'd his last ?

Phil. Life ebbs apace ;
'To-morrow's sun sees him a breathless corse.

Dio. Curse on his ling'ring pangs ! Sicilia's crown
No more shall deck his brow ; and if the sand
Still loiter in the glass, thy hand, my friend,
May shake it thence.

Phil. It shall, dread sir ; that task
Leave to thy faithful servant.

Dio. Oh ! Philotas,
Thou little know'st the cares, the pangs of empire.
The ermin'd pride, the purple that adorns
A conqueror's breast, but serves, my friend, to hide
A heart that's torn, that's mangled with remorse.
Each object round me wakens horrid doubts ;
The flatt'ring train, the sentinel that guards me,
The slave that waits, all give some new alarm,
And from the means of safety dangers rise.
Ev'n victory itself plants anguish here,
And round my laurels the fell serpent twines.

Phil. Would Dionysius abdicate his crown,
And sue for terms of peace ?

Dio. Detested thought !
No, though ambition teem with countless ills,
It still has charms of pow'r to fire the soul.
Though horrors multiply around my head,
I will oppose them all. The pomp of sacrifice,
But now ordain'd, is mockery to Heav'n.
'Tis vain, 'tis fruitless ; then let daring guilt
Be my inspirer, and consummate all.
Where are those Greeks, the captives of my sword,
Whose desperate valour rush'd within our walls,
Fought near our person, and the pointed lance
Aim'd at my breast ?

Phil. In chains they wait their doom.

Dio. Give me to see 'em ; bring the slaves before me.

Phil. What, ho ! Melanthon, this way lead your prisoners.

Enter MELANTHON, with GREEK OFFICERS and SOLDIERS.

Dio. Assassins, and not warriors ! do ye come, When the wide range of battle claims your sword, Thus do ye come against a single life To wage the war ? Did not our buckler ring With all your darts, in one collected volley, Shower'd on my head ? Did not your swords at once Point at my breast, and thirst for regal blood ?

G. Off. We sought thy life. I am by birth a Greek.

An open foe in arms, I meant to slay The foe of human kind. With rival ardour We took the field ; one voice, one mind, one heart ; All leagu'd, all covenanted : in yon camp Spirits there are who aim, like us, at glory. Whene'er you sally forth, whene'er the Greeks Shall scale your walls, prepare thee to encounter A like assault. By me the youth of Greece Thus notify the war they mean to wage.

Dio. Thus, then, I warn them of my great revenge. Whoe'er in battle shall become our pris'ner, In torment meets his doom.

G. Off. Then wilt thou see How vile the body to a mind that pants For genuine glory. Twice three hundred Greeks Have sworn like us, to hunt thee through the ranks ; Ours the first lot ; we've fail'd ; on yonder plain Appear in arms, the faithful band will meet thee.

Dio. Vile slave, no more. Melanthon, drag 'em hence To die in misery. Impal'd alive, The winds shall parch them on the craggy cliff.

Selected from the rest, let one depart
 A messenger to Greece, to tell the fate
 Her chosen sons, her first adventurers met.

[Exit DIONYSIUS.]

Mel. Unhappy men ! how shall my care protect
 Your forfeit lives ? Philotas, thou conduct them
 To the deep dungeon's gloom. In that recess,
 'Midst the wild tumult of eventful war
 We may ward off the blow. My friends, farewell :
 That officer will guide your steps.

[All follow PHILOTAS, except PHOCION.]

Phoc. Satisfy my doubts ; how fares Euphrasia ?

Mel. Euphrasia lives, and fills the anxious moments

With every virtue. Wherefore venture hither ?
 Why with rash valour penetrate our gates ?

Phoc. Could I refrain ? Oh ! could I tamely wait
 Th' event of ling'ring war ? With patience count
 The lazy-pacing hours, while here in Syracuse
 The tyrant keeps all that my heart holds dear ;
 For her dear sake, all danger sinks before me ?
 For her I burst the barriers of the gate,
 Where the deep cavern'd rock affords a passage.
 A hundred chosen Greeks pursu'd my steps,
 We forc'd an entrance ; the devoted guard
 Fell victims to our rage ; but in that moment
 Down from the walls superior numbers came.
 The tyrant led them on. We rush'd upon him,
 If we could reach his heart, to end the war.
 But Heav'n thought otherwise. Melanthon, say,—
 I fear to ask it, lives Evander still ?

Mel. Alas, he lives imprisoned in the rock.
 Thou must withdraw thee hence ; regain once more
 Timoleon's camp ! alarm his slumb'ring rage ;
 Assail the walls ; thou with thy phalanx seek
 The subterraneous path ; that way at night
 The Greeks may enter, and let in destruction
 On the astonish'd foe.

Phoc. By Heav'n I will ;
My breath shall wake his rage ; this very night
When sleep sits heavy on the slumb'ring city,
Then Greece unsheaths her sword, and great revenge
Shall stalk with death and horror o'er the ranks
Of slaughter'd troops a sacrifice to freedom !
But first let me behold Euphrasia.

Mel. Hush
Thy pent-up valour : to a secret haunt
I'll guide thy steps ; there dwell, and in apt time
I'll bring Euphrasia to thy longing arms.

Phoc. Oh ! lead me to her ; that exalted virtue
With firmer nerve shall bid me grasp the javelin ;
Shall bid my sword with more than lightning's swift-
ness.

Blaze in the front of war, and glut its rage
With blow repeated in the tyrant's veins. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Temple, with a Monument in the Middle.

Enter EUPHRASIA, ERIXENE, and other Female Attendants.

Eup. This way, my virgins, this way bend your steps.

Lo ! the sad sepulchre where, hears'd in death,
The pale remains of my dear mother lie.
There, while the victims at yon altar bleed,
And with your pray'rs the vaulted roof resounds.
There let me pay the tribute of a tear,
A weeping pilgrim o'er Eudocia's ashes.

Erix. Forbear, Euphrasia, to renew your sorrows.

Eup. My tears have dry'd their source ; then let
me here,
Pay this sad visit to the honour'd clay,

That moulders in the tomb. These sacred viands
 I'll burn an offering to a parent's shade,
 And sprinkle with this wine the hallow'd mould.
 That duty paid, I will return, my virgins.

[She goes into the Tomb.]

Erix. Look down, propitious pow'rs ! behold that
 virtue,
 And heal the pangs that desolate her soul.

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. Mourn, mourn, ye virgins ; rend your scat-
 ter'd garments :
 Some dread calamity hangs o'er our heads.
 In vain the tyrant would appease with sacrifice
 Th' impending wrath of ill-requited Heav'n.
 Ill omens hover o'er us : at the altar
 The victim dropp'd, ere the divining seer
 Had gor'd his knife. The brazen statues tremble,
 And from the marble, drops of blood distil.

Erix. Now, ye just gods, if vengeance you prepare,
 Now find the guilty head.

Enter EUPHRASIA, from the Tomb.

Eup. Virgins, I thank you—Oh ! more lightly
 now

My heart expands ; the pious act is done,
 And I have paid my tribute to a parent.
 Ah ! wherefore does the tyrant bend his way ?

Phil. He flies the altar ; leaves th' unfinish'd rites.
 No god there smiles propitious on his cause.
 Fate lifts the awful balance ; weighs his life,
 The lives of numbers, in the trembling scale.

Eup. Despair and horror mark his haggard looks.
 Do you retire,
 Retire, Philotas ; let me here remain,
 And give the moments of suspended fate
 To pious worship and to filial love.

Phil. Alas ! I fear to yield : awhile I'll leave thee,
And at the temple's entrance wait thy coming.

[*Exit:*

Eup. Now, then, Euphrasia, now thou may'st indulge
The purest ecstasy of soul. Come forth,
Thou man of woe, thou man of every virtue.

Enter EVANDER, from the Monument.

Eva. And does the grave thus cast me up again,
With a fond father's love to view thee ? Thus
To mingle rapture in a daughter's arms ?

Eup. How fares my father now ?

Eva. Thy aid, Euphrasia,
Has giv'n new life. Thou from this vital stream
Deriv'st thy being ; with unheard-of duty
Thou hast repaid it to thy native source.

Eup. Sprung from Evander, if a little portion
Of all his goodness dwell within my heart,
Thou wilt not wonder.

Eva. Joy and wonder rise
In mix'd emotions !—Though departing hence,
After the storms of a tempestuous life,
Tho' I was entering the wish'd-for port,
Where all is peace, all bliss, and endless joy,
Yet here contented I can linger still
To view thy goodness, and applaud thy deeds,
Thou author of my life ?—Did ever parent
Thus call his child before ?—my heart's too full,
My old fond heart runs o'er ; it aches with joy.

Eup. Alas ! too much you over-rate your daughter ;
Nature and duty call'd me—Oh ! my father,
How didst thou bear thy long, long suff'rings ? How
Endure their barb'rous rage ?

Eva. My foes but did
To this old frame, what Nature's hand must do.
In the worst hour of pain, a voice still whisper'd me,
“ Rouse thee, Evander ; self-acquitting conscience

“ Declares thee blameless, and the gods behold thee.”
I was but going hence by mere decay,
To that futurity which Plato taught.
Thither, oh ! thither was Evander going,
But thou recall’st me ; thou !

Eup. Timoleon too
Invites thee back to life.

Eva. And does he still
Urge on the siege ?

Eup. His active genius comes
To scourge a guilty race. The Punic fleet,
Half lost, is swallow’d by the roaring sea.
The shatter’d refuse seek the Lybian shore,
To bear the news of their defeat to Carthage.

Eva. These are thy wonders, Heaven ! Abroad thy
spirit
Moves o’er the deep, and mighty fleets are vanish’d.

Eup. Ha !—hark !—what noise is that !
Some busy footstep beats the hallow’d pavement.
Oh ! sir, retire—Ye pow’rs !—Philotas !—ha !

Enter PHILOTAS.

Phil. For thee, Euphrasia, Dionysius calls.
Some new suspicion goads him. At yon gate
I stopp’d Calippus, as with eager haste
He bent his way to seek thee.—Oh ! my sovereign,
My King, my injur’d master, will you pardon
The wrongs I’ve done thee ? [*Kneels to EVANDER.*]

Eva. Virtue such as thine,
From the fierce trial of tyrannic pow’r,
Shines forth with added lustre.

Phil. Oh ! forgive
My ardent zeal ? there is no time to waste.
You must withdraw ; trust to your faithful friends.
Pass but another day, and Dionysius
Falls from a throne usurp’d.

Eva. But ere he pays
The forfeit of his crimes, what streams of blood

Shall flow in torrents round ! Methinks I might
Prevent this waste of nature—I'll go forth
And to my people show their rightful king.

Eup. Banish that thought ; forbear ; the rash attempt

Were fatal to our hopes ; oppress'd, dismay'd,
The people look aghast, and, wan with fear,
None dare espouse your cause.

Eva. Yes, all will dare
To act like men ;—their king, I gave myself
To a whole people. I made no reserve ;
My life was theirs ; each drop about my heart
Pledg'd to the public cause ; devoted to it ;
That was my compact ; is the subjects' less ?
If they are all debas'd, and willing slaves,
The young but breathing to grow grey in bondage,
And the old sinking to ignoble graves,
Of such a race no matter who is king.
And yet I will not think it ; no ! my people
Are brave and gen'rous ; I will trust their valour.

Eup. Yet stay ; yet be advis'd.

Phil. As yet, my liege,
No plan is fix'd, and no concerted measure.
The fates are busy : wait the vast event.
Trust to my truth and honour. Witness, gods,
Here, in the temple of Olympian Jove,
Philotas swears——

Eva. Forbear : the man like thee,
Who feels the best emotions of the heart,
Truth, reason, justice, honour's fine excitements,
Acts by those laws, and wants no other sanction.

Eup. Again th'alarm approaches ; sure destruction

To thee, to all, will follow :—hark ! a sound
Comes hollow murm'ring through the vaulted aisle.
It gains upon the ear. Withdraw, my father ;
All's lost, if thou art seen.

Phil. And lo ! Calippus
Darts with the lightning's speed across the aisle.

Eva. Thou at the senate house convene my friends.
Melanthon, Dion, and their brave associates,
Will show, that liberty has leaders still.
Anon I'll meet them there: my child, farewell;
Thou shalt direct me now.

[*Exit PHILOTAS.—EVANDER enters the Tomb.*

Eup. *Coming forward.*] How my distracted heart
throbs wild with fear !

What brings Calippus ? wherefore ? save me, Heaven !

Enter CALIPPUS.

Cal. This sullen musing in these drear abodes
Alarms suspicion : the king knows thy plottings,
Thy rooted hatred to the state and him.
His sov'reign will commands thee to repair
This moment to his presence.

Eup. Ha ! what means
The tyrant ?—I obey. [*Exit CALIPPUS.*] And, oh ! ye
pow'rs,
Ye ministers of Heaven, defend my father ;
Support his drooping age ; and when anon
Avenging justice shakes her crimson steel,
Oh ! be the grave at least a place of rest ;
That from his covert, in the hour of peace,
Forth he may come to bless a willing people,
And be your own just image here on earth. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

Enter DIONYSIUS, CALIPPUS, &c.

Dio. Away each vain alarm ; the sun goes down :
Nor yet Timoleon issues from his fleet.
There let him linger on the wave-worn beach ;
Here the vain Greek shall find another Troy,
A more than Hector here. Though Carthage fly,
Ourself, still Dionysius, here remains.
And means the Greek to treat of terms of peace ?
By Heav'n, this panting bosom hop'd to meet
His boasted phalanx on the embattled plain.
And doth he now, on peaceful councils bent,
Despatch his herald ?—Let the slave approach.

Enter the HERALD.

Now speak thy purpose ; what doth Greece impart ?

Her. Timoleon, sir, whose great renown in arms
Is equall'd only by the softer virtues
Of mild humanity, that sway his heart,
Sends me his delegate to offer terms,
On which ev'n foes may well accord ; on which
The fiercest nature, though it spurns at justice,
May sympathize with his.

Dio. Unfold thy mystery ;
Thou shalt be heard.

Her. The gen'rous leader sees,
With pity sees, the wild destructive havoc
Of ruthless war ; he hath survey'd around
The heaps of slain that cover yonder field,
And, touch'd with gen'rous sense of human woe,
Weeps o'er his victories.

Dio. Your leader weeps !

Then let the author of those ills thou speak'st of,
Let the ambitious factor of destruction,
Timely retreat, and close the scene of blood.
Why doth affrighted peace behold his standard
Uprear'd in Sicily? and wherefore here
The iron ranks of war, from which the shepherd
Retires appall'd, and leaves the blasted hopes
Of half the year, while closer to her breast
The mother clasps her infant?

Her. 'Tis not mine
To plead Timoleon's cause; not mine the office
To justify the strong, the righteous motives
That urge him to the war: the only scope
My deputation aims at, is to fix
An interval of peace, a pause of horror,
That they, whose bodies, on the naked shore,
Lie weltering in their blood, from either host
May meet the last sad rites to nature due,
And decent lie in honourable graves.

Dio. Go tell your leader, his pretexts are vain.
Let him, with those that live, embark for Greece,
And leave our peaceful plains; the mangled limbs
Of those he murder'd, from my tender care
Shall meet due obsequies.

Her. The hero, sir,
Wages no war with those, who bravely die.
'Tis for the dead I supplicate; for them
We sue for peace; and to the living too
Timoleon would extend it, but the groans
Of a whole people have unsheath'd his sword.
A single day will pay the funeral rites.
To-morrow's sun may see both armies meet
Without hostility, and all in honour;
You to inter the troops who bravely fell;
We, on our part, to give an humble sod
To those, who gain'd a footing on the isle,
And by their death have conquer'd.

Dio. Be it so;

I grant thy suit : soon as to-morrow's dawn
Illume the world, the rage of wasting war
In vain shall thirst for blood.

Thou know'st my last resolve, and now farewell,
Some careful officer conduct him forth.

[Exit HERALD.

By Heav'n, the Greek hath offered to my sword
An easy prey ; a sacrifice to glut

My great revenge. Calippus, let each soldier

This night resign his wearied limbs to rest,

That ere the dawn, with renovated strength,

On the unguarded, unsuspecting foe,

Disarm'd, and bent on superstitious rites,

From every quarter we may rush undaunted,

Give the invaders to the deathful steel,

And by one carnage bury all in ruin.

My valiant friends, haste to your several posts,

And let this night a calm unruffled spirit

Lie hush'd in sleep : away, my friends, disperse.

Philotas, waits Euphrasia as we order'd?

Phil. She's here at hand.

Dio. Admit her to our presence.

Rage and despair, a thousand warring passions,

All rise by turns, and piecemeal rend my heart.

Yet ev'ry means, all measures must be tried,

To sweep the Grecian spoiler from the land,

And fix the crown unshaken on my brow.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Eup. What sudden cause requires Euphrasia's presence ?

Dio. Approach, fair mourner, and dispel thy fears.

Thy grief, thy tender duty to thy father,

Has touch'd me nearly. In his lone retreat,

Respect, attendance, every lenient care

To sooth affliction, and extend his life,

Evander has commanded.

Eup. Vile dissembler !

Detested homicide ! [*Aside.*]—And has thy heart
Felt for the wretched ?

Dio. Urgencies of state
Abridg'd his liberty ; but to his person
All honour hath been paid.

Eup. The righteous gods
Have mark'd thy ways, and will in time repay
Just retribution.

Dio. If to see your father,
If here to meet him in a fond embrace,
Will calm thy breast, and dry those beauteous tears,
A moment more shall bring him to your presence.

Eup. Ha ! lead him hither ! Sir, to move him now,
Aged, infirm, worn out with toil and years—
No, let me seek him rather—If soft pity
Has touch'd your heart, oh ! send me, send me to
him.

Dio. Control this wild alarm ; with prudent care
Philotas shall conduct him ; here I grant
The tender interview.

Eup. Disastrous fate !
Ruin impends !—This will discover all !
I'll perish first. [*Aside.*
Though much I languish to behold my father,
Yet now it were not fit—the sun goes down ;
Night falls apace ; soon as returning day—

Dio. This night, this very hour, you both must
meet.

Together you may serve the state and me.
'Thou seest the havoc of wide wasting war ;
And more, full well you know, are still to bleed.
Thou may'st prevent their fate.

Eup. Oh ! give the means,
And I will bless thee for it.

Dio. From a Greek
Torments have wrung the truth. Thy husband, Pho-
cion—

Eup. Oh ! say, speak of my Phocion.

Dio. He ; 'tis he
Hath kindled up this war ; with treacherous arts
Inflam'd the states of Greece ; and now the traitor
Comes with a foreign aid to wrest my crown.

Eup. And does my Phocion share Timoleon's glory ?

Dio. With him invests our walls, and bids rebellion
Erect her standard here.

Eup. Oh ! bless him gods !

Where'er my hero treads the paths of war,
List on his side ; against the hostile javelin
Uprear his mighty buckler ; to his sword
Lend the fierce whirlwind's rage, that he may come
With wreaths of triumph, and with conquest crown'd,
And a whole nation's voice
Applaud my hero with a love like mine !

Dio. Ungrateful fair ! Has not our sovereign will
On thy descendants fix'd Sicilia's crown ?
Have I not vow'd protection to your boy ?

Eup. From thee the crown ! from thee ! Euphra-
sia's children

Shall on a nobler basis found their rights ;
On their own virtue, and a people's choice.

Dio. Misguided woman !

Eup. Ask of thee protection !

The father's valour shall protect his boy.

Dio. Rush not on sure destruction ; ere too late
Accept our proffer'd grace. The terms are these ;
Instant send forth a message to your husband ;
Bid him draw off his Greeks ! unmoor his fleet,
And measure back his way. Full well he knows
You and your father are my hostages ;
And for his treason both may answer.

Eup. Think'st thou then

So meanly of my Phocion ?—Dost thou deem him
Poorly wound up to a mere fit of valour,
To melt away in a weak woman's tear ?

Oh ! thou dost little know him ; know'st but little
Of his exalted soul. With gen'rous ardour

Still will he urge the great, the glorious plan,
And gain the ever honour'd bright reward,
Which fame entwines around the patriot's brow,
And bids for ever flourish on his tomb,
For nations freed, and tyrants laid in dust.

Dio. By Heav'n, this night Evander breathes his
last.

Eup. Better for him to sink at once to rest,
Than linger thus beneath the gripe of famine,
In a vile dungeon, scoop'd with barb'rous skill
Deep in the flinty rock ; a monument
Of that fell malice, and that black suspicion,
That mark'd your father's reign ; a dungeon drear,
Prepar'd for innocence !—Vice liv'd secure,
It flourish'd, triumph'd, grateful to his heart ;
'Twas virtue only could give umbrage ; then,
In that black period, to be great and good
Was a state crime ; the pow'rs of genius then
Were a constructive treason.

Dio. Now your father's doom
Is fix'd ; irrevocably fix'd.

Eup. Thy doom, perhaps,
May first be fix'd ; the doom that ever waits
The fell oppressor, from a throne usurp'd
Hurl'd headlong down. Think of thy father's fate
At Corinth, Dionysius !

Dio. Ha ! this night
Evander dies ; and thou, detested fair !
Thou shalt behold him, while inventive cruelty
Pursues his wearied life through every nerve.
I scorn all dull delay. This very night
Shall sate my great revenge.

[Exit.]

Eup. This night, perhaps,
Shall whelm thee down, no more to blast creation.
My father, who inhabit'st with the dead,
Now let me seek thee in the lonely tomb,
And tremble there with anxious hope and fear.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.

The Inside of the Temple.

Enter PHOCION and MELANTHON.

Phoc. Each step I move, a grateful terror shakes
My frame to dissolution.

Mel. Summon all
Thy wonted firmness ; in that dreary vault
A living king is number'd with the dead.
I'll take my post, near where the pillar'd aisle
Supports the central dome, that no alarm
Surprise you in the pious act. *[Exit.*

Phoc. If here
They both are found ; if in Evander's arms
Euphrasia meets my search, the fates atone
For all my suff'rings, all afflictions past.
Yes, I will seek them—ha !—the gaping tomb
Invites my steps—now, be propitious Heaven!
[He enters the Tomb.

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Eup. All hail, ye caves of horror !—In this gloom
Divine content can dwell, the heartfelt tear,
Which, as it falls, a father's trembling hand
Will catch, and wipe the sorrows from my eye,
Thou Pow'r supreme ! whose all-pervading mind
Guides this great frame of things ; who now behold'st
me,
Who, in that cave of death, art full as perfect
As in the gorgeous palace, now, while night
Broods o'er the world, I'll to thy sacred shrine,

And supplicate thy mercies to my father.
Who's there?—Evander?—Answer—tell me—
speak—

Enter PHOCION, from the Tomb.

Phoc. What voice is that?—Melanthon!

Eup. Ha! those sounds!—

Speak of Evander; tell me that he lives,
Or lost Euphrasia dies.

Phoc. Heart-swelling transport!

Art thou Euphrasia? 'tis thy Phocion, love;
Thy husband comes.

Eup. Support me;—reach thy hand.

Phoc. Once more I clasp her in this fond embrace!

Eup. What miracle has brought thee to me?

Phoc. Love

Inspir'd my heart, and guided all my ways.

Eup. Oh, thou dear wanderer! But wherefore
here?

Why in this place of woe? My tender little one,—
Say, is he safe? Oh! satisfy a mother;
Speak of my child, or I go wild at once!
Tell me his fate, and tell me all thy own.

Phoc. Your boy is safe, Euphrasia; lives to reign
In Sicily: Timoleon's gen'rous care
Protects him in his camp:—dispel thy fears;
The gods once more will give him to thy arms.

Eup. My father lives sepulchred ere his time,
Here in Eudocia's tomb; let me conduct thee.

Phoc. I came this moment thence.

Eup. And saw Evander?

Phoc. Alas! I found him not.

Eup. Not found him there?—

And have they then—Have the fell murderers—Oh!

[Faints away.]

Phoc. I've been too rash; revive, my love, revive;
Thy Phocion calls; the gods will guard Evander,
And save him to reward thy matchless virtue.

Enter EVANDER and MELANTHON.

Eva. Lead me, Melanthon; guide my aged steps;
Where is he? let me see him.

Phoc. My Euphrasia;
Thy father lives;—thou venerable man!
Behold!—I cannot fly to thy embrace.

Eup. These agonies must end me—ah, my father!
Again I have him, gracious pow'rs! again
I clasp his hand, and bathe it with my tears.

Eva. Euphrasia!—Phocion, too!—Yes, both are
here!

Oh, let me thus, thus strain you to my heart.

Phoc. Protected by a daughter's tender care,
By my Euphrasia sav'd! That sweet reflection
Exalts the bliss to rapture.

Eup. Why, my father,
Why thus adventure forth! The strong alarm
O'erwhelm'd my spirits.

Eva. I went forth, my child,
When all was dark, and awful silence round,
To throw me prostrate at the altar's foot,
And crave the care of Heav'n for thee and thine.
Melanthon there——

Enter PHILOTAS:

Phil. Inevitable ruin hovers o'er you:
The tyrant's fury mounts into a blaze;
Unsated yet with blood, he calls aloud
For thee, Evander! thee his rage hath order'd
This moment to his presence.

Eva. Lead me to him:
His presence hath no terror for Evander.

Eup. Horror! It must not be.

Phil. No, never, never:
I'll perish rather! But the time demands
Our utmost vigour. His policy has granted

A day's suspense from arms ; yet even now
His troops prepare, in the dead midnight hour,
With base surprise to storm Timoleon's camp.

Eva. And doth he grant a false insidious truce,
To turn the hour of peace to blood and horror?

Eup. I know the monster well : when specious
 seeming
Becalms his looks, the rankling heart within
Teems with destruction.

Mel. Now, Phocion, now, on thee our hope de-
 pends.

Fly to Timoleon ; I can grant a passport :
Rouse him to vengeance ; on the tyrant turn
His own insidious arts, or all is lost.

Phoc. Evander thou, and thou, my best Euphrasia,
Both shall attend my flight.

Mel. It were in vain ;
Th'attempt would hazard all.

Eup. Together here
We will remain, safe in the cave of death ;
And wait our freedom from thy conqu'ring arm.

Eva. Oh, would the gods roll back the stream of
 time,
And give this arm the sinew that it boasted
At Tauromenium, when its force resistless
Mow'd down the ranks of war : I then might guide
The battle's rage, and, ere Evander die,
Add still another laurel to my brow.

Eup. Enough of laurell'd victory your sword
Hath reap'd in earlier days.

Eva. And shall my sword,
When the great cause of liberty invites,
Remain inactive, unperforming quite ?
Youth, second youth, rekindles in my veins :
Tho' worn with age, this arm will know its office ;
Will show, that victory has not forgot
Acquaintance with this hand.—And yet—O shame

It will not be: the momentary blaze
Sinks, and expires: I have survived it all;
Surviv'd my reign, my people, and myself.

Eup. Fly, Phocion, fly; Melanthon will conduct thee.

Mel. And, when th'assault begins, my faithful cohorts

Shall form their ranks around this sacred dome.

Phoc. And my poor captive friends, my brave companions

Taken in battle, wilt thou guard their lives?

Mel. Trust to my care: no danger shall assail them.

Phoc. By Heav'n, the glorious expectation swells
This panting bosom! Yes, Euphrasia, yes;
A while I leave you to the care of Heaven.
Fell Dionysius tremble; ere the dawn
Timoleon thunders at your gates! the rage,
The pent-up rage, of twenty thousand Greeks,
Shall burst at once; and the tumultuous roar,
Alarm th'astonish'd world.

Eva. Yet, ere thou go'st, young man,
Attend my words: Tho' guilt may oft provoke,
As now it does, just vengeance on its head,
In mercy punish it. The rage of slaughter
Can add no trophy to the victor's triumph;
Bid him not shed unnecessary blood.
Conquest is proud, inexorable, fierce;
It is humanity ennobles all.
So thinks Evander, and so tell Timoleon.

Phoc. Farewell;—the midnight hour shall give you freedom.

[Exit, with MELANTHON and PHILOTAS.]

Eup. Ye guardian deities, watch all his ways.

Eva. Come, my Euphrasia, in this interval
Together we will seek the sacred altar,
And thank the God, whose presence fills the dome,
For all the wond'rous goodness lavish'd on us.

[Exeunt.]

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

Enter DIONYSIUS and CALIPPUS.

Dio. Ere the day clos'd, while yet the busy eye
Might view their camp, their stations, and their
guards,

Their preparations for approaching night ;—

Didst thou then mark the motions of the Greek ?

Cal. From the watch-tower I saw them : all things
spoke

A foe secure, and discipline relax'd.

Dio. Their folly gives them to my sword. Are all
My orders issued ?

Cal. All.

Dio. The troops retir'd
To gain recruited vigour from repose ?

Cal. The city round lies hush'd in sleep.

Dio. Anon

Let each brave officer, of chosen valour,
Forsake his couch, and with delib'rate spirit,
Meet at the citadel. An hour, at furthest,
Before the dawn ; 'tis fix'd to storm their camp ;
Haste, Calippus,
Fly to thy post, and bid Euphrasia enter.

[*Exit CALIPPUS.*

Evander dies this night :—Euphrasia too
Shall be dispos'd of. Curse on Phocion's fraud,
That from my pow'r withdrew their infant boy.
In him the seed of future kings were crush'd,
And the whole hated line at once extinguish'd,

Enter EUPHRASIA.

Once more approach and hear me ; 'tis not now
A time to waste in the vain war of words.
A crisis big with horror is at hand.
I meant to spare the stream of blood, that soon
Shall deluge yonder plains. My fair proposals
Thy haughty spirit has with scorn rejected.
And now, by Heav'n, here, in thy very sight,
Evander breathes his last.

Eup. If yet there's wanting
A crime to fill the measure of thy guilt,
Add that black murder to the dreadful list;—
With that complete the horrors of thy reign.

Dio. Woman, beware : Philotas is at hand,
And to our presence leads Evander. All
Thy dark complottings, and thy treach'rous arts,
Have prov'd abortive.

Eup. Ha! — What new event ?
And is Philotas false ? — Has he betray'd him ?

[*Aside.*

Dio. What, ho ! Philotas !

Enter PHILOTAS.

Eup. How my heart sinks within me !

Dio. Where's your pris'ner ?

Phil. Evander is no more.

Dio. Ha ! — Death has robb'd me
Of half my great revenge.

Phil. Worn out with anguish,
I saw life ebb apace. With studied art
We gave each cordial drop, alas, in vain ;
He heav'd a sigh, invok'd his daughter's name,
Smil'd, and expir'd.

Dio. Bring me his hoary head !

Phil. You'll pardon, sir, my over-hasty zeal.

I gave the body to the foaming surge,
Down the steep rock despis'd.

Dio. Now rave and shriek,
And rend your scatter'd hair. No more Evander
Shall sway Sicilia's sceptre.
Now then, thou feel'st my vengeance.

Eup. Glory in it;
Exult and triumph. Thy worst shaft is sped.
Yet still th'unconquer'd mind with scorn can view
thee;

With the calm sunshine of the breast can see,
Thy pow'r unequal to subdue the soul,
Which virtue form'd, and which the gods protect.

Dio. Philotas, bear her hence; she shall not live;
This moment, bear her hence!—you know the rest:—
Go, see our will obey'd; that done, with all
A warrior's speed, attend me at the citadel;—
There meet the heroes, whom this night shall lead
To freedom, victory,—to glorious havoc,
And the destruction of the Grecian name. [*Exit.*

Eup. Accept my thanks, Philotas;—generous man!
These tears attest th'emotions of my heart.
But, oh! should Greece defer——

Phil. Dispel thy fears;
Phocion will bring relief; or should the tyrant
Assault their camp, he'll meet a marshall'd foe.
Let me conduct thee to the silent tomb.

Eup. Ah! there Evander, naked and disarm'd,
Defenceless quite, may meet some ruffian stroke.

Phil. Lo here's a weapon; bear this dagger to him.
In the drear monument, should hostile steps
Dare to approach him, they must enter singly;
This guards the passage; man by man they die.
There may'st thou dwell amidst the wild commotion.

Eup. Ye pitying gods, protect my father there!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Citadel.

Enter CALIPPUS, and several OFFICERS: DIONYSIUS meeting them.

Dio. Ye brave associates, who so oft have shar'd
Our toil and danger in the field of glory,
My fellow warriors, what no god could promise,
Fortune hath giv'n us. In his dark embrace
Lo ! sleep envelops the whole Grecian camp.
Against a foe, the outcasts of their country,
Freebooters, roving in pursuit of prey,
Success by war or covert stratagem
Alike is glorious. Then, my gallant friends,
What need of words? The gen'rous call of freedom,
Your wives, your children, your invaded rights,
All that can steel the patriot breast with valour,
Expands and rouses in the swelling heart.
Follow th'impulsive ardour; follow me,
Your king, your leader: in the friendly gloom
Of night, assault their camp; your country's love,
And fame eternal, shall attend the men
Who march'd through blood and horror, to redeem,
From the invader's pow'r, their native land.

Cal. Lead to the onset; Greece shall find we bear
Hearts prodigal of blood, when honour calls,
Resolv'd to conquer or to die in freedom.

Dio. Thus I've resolv'd: When the declining moon
Hath veil'd her orb, our silent march begins.
The order thus:—Calippus thou lead forth
Iberia's sons with the Numidian bands,
And line the shore.—Perdiccas, be it thine

To march thy cohorts to the mountain's foot,
Where the wood skirts the valley ; there make halt
Till brave Amyntor stretch along the vale.
Ourself with the embodied cavalry
Clad in their mail'd cuirass, will circle round
To where their camp extends its furthest line ;
Unnumber'd torches there shall blaze at once,
The signal of the charge ; then, oh, my friends !
On every side let the wild uproar loose,
Bid massacre and carnage stalk around,
Unsparing, unrelenting ; drench your swords
In hostile blood, and riot in destruction.
Away, my friends !
Rouse all the war ! fly to your sev'ral posts,
And instant bring all Syracuse in arms !

[*Exeunt.—Warlike music.*]

SCENE III.

The Inside of the Temple.

A Monument in the Middle.

EUPHRASIA, ERIXENE, and FEMALE ATTENDANTS.

Eup. Which way, Erixene, which way, my virgins,
Shall we direct our steps ? What sacred altar
Clasp on our knees ?

Erix. Alas, the horrid tumult
Spreads the destruction wide. On ev'ry side
The victor's shouts, the groans of murder'd wretches,
In wild confusion rise. Once more descend
Eudocia's tomb ; there thou may'st find a shelter.

Eup. Anon, Erixene, I mean to visit,
Perhaps for the last time, a mother's urn.
This dagger there, this instrument of death,
Should fortune prosper the fell tyrant's arms,

This dagger then may free me from his power,
And that drear vault entomb us all in peace.

[*Puts up the Dagger.*]

The din

Of arms with clearer sound advances. Hark !

That sudden burst!—Again!—They rush upon us !

The portal opens ; lo !—see there !—behold,

War, horrid war, invades the sacred fane ;

No altar gives a sanctuary now. [*Warlike Music.*]

*Enter DIONYSIUS and CALIPPUS, with several
SOLDIERS.*

Dio. Here will I mock their siege ; here stand at bay,
And brave them to the last.

Cal. Our weary foes
Desist from the pursuit.

Dio. Tho' all betray me,
Tho' ev'ry god conspire, I will not yield.
If I must fall, the temple's pond'rous roof,
The mansion of the gods combin'd against me,
Shall first be crush'd, and lie in ruin with me.
Euphrasia here ! Detested, treach'rous woman !
For my revenge preserv'd !—By Heav'n 'tis well ;
Vengeance awaits thy guilt, and this good sword
Thus sends thee to atone the bleeding victims
This night has massacred.

Cal. [*Holding DIONYSIUS's Arm.*] My liege, forbear ;
Her life preserv'd may plead your cause with Greece,
And mitigate your fate.

Dio. Presumptuous slave !
My rage is up in arms ;—by Heav'n, she dies.

Enter EVANDER, from the Tomb.

Eva. Horror ! forbear !—Thou murd'rer, hold thy
hand !
The gods behold thee, horrible assassin !
Restrain the blow ; it were a stab to Heav'n ;

All nature shudders at it!—Will no friend
Arm in a cause like this a father's hand?
Strike at this bosom rather. Lo! Evander
Prostrate and groveling on the earth before thee!
He begs to die:—exhaust the scanty drops
That lag about his heart;—but spare my child.

Dio. Evander!—Do my eyes once more behold
him?—

May the fiends seize Philotas! Treach'rous slave!
'Tis well thou liv'st; thy death were poor revenge
From any hand but mine. [*Offers to strike.*]

Eup. No, tyrant, no; [*Rushing before EVANDER.*]
I have provok'd your vengeance; through this bosom
Open a passage; first on me, on me
Exhaust your fury. Ev'ry pow'r above
Commands thee to respect that aged head:
His wither'd frame wants blood to glut thy rage:
Strike here; these veins are full; here's blood enough;
The purple tide will gush to glad thy sight.

Dio. Amazement blasts and freezes ev'ry pow'r!
Ha! the fierce tide of war [*A Flourish of Trumpets.*]
This way comes rushing on.

Goes to the Top of the Stage.

Eup. [*Embracing EVANDER.*] Oh! thus, my father,
We'll perish thus together.

Dio. Bar the gates;
Close ev'ry passage, and repel their force.

Eva. And must I see thee bleed? O, for a sword!
Bring, bring me daggers!

Eup. Ha!

Dio. Guards, seize the slave,
And give him to my rage.

Eva. [*Seized by the GUARDS.*] Oh!
Inhuman villains!

Eup. Now, one glorious effort!

Dio. Let me despatch; thou traitor, thus my arm—

Eup. A daughter's arm, fell monster, strikes the
blow. [*Stabs DIONYSIUS.*]

Yes, first she strikes ; an injur'd daughter's arm
Sends thee devoted to th' infernal gods. [*He falls.*

Dio. May curses blast thy arm ! May Ætna's fires
Convulse the land ; to its foundation shake
The groaning isle ! May civil discord bear
Her flaming brand through all the realms of Greece ;
And the whole race expire in pangs like mine ! [*Dies.*

Eup. Behold, all Sicily behold !—The point
Glows with the tyrant's blood. Ye slaves, [*To the*
GUARDS.] look there ;

Kneel to your rightful king ; the blow for freedom
Gives you the rights of men ! And, oh, my father,
My ever honour'd sire, it gives thee life !

Eva. My child—my daughter—sav'd again by
thee ! [*He embraces her.*

A Flourish of Trumpets. Enter PHOCION, MELANTHON, PHILOTAS, &c.

Phoc. Now let the monster yield,—My best Euphrasia !

Eup. My lord !—my Phocion !—welcome to my heart.—

Lo ! there the wonders of Euphrasia's arm !

Phoc. And is the proud one fall'n ! The dawn shall
—see him

A spectacle for public view. Euphrasia !
Evander too !—Thus to behold you both—

Eva. To her direct thy looks ; there fix thy praise,
And gaze with wonder there. The life I gave her,
Oh, she has us'd it for the noblest ends !
To fill each duty ; make her father feel
The purest joy, the heart-dissolving bliss
To have a grateful child.—But has the rage
Of slaughter ceas'd ?

Phoc. It has.

Eva. Where is Timoleon ?

Phoc. He guards the citadel ; there gives his orders
To calm the uproar, and recal from carnage
His conqu'ring troops.

Eup. Oh ! once again, my father,
Thy sway shall bless the land. Not for himself
Timoleon conquers ; to redress the wrongs
Of bleeding Sicily, the hero comes.
Thee, good Melanthon, thee, thou gen'rous man,
His justice shall reward. Thee too, Philotas,
Whose sympathizing heart could feel the touch
Of soft humanity, the hero's bounty,
His brightest honours, shall be lavish'd on thee.
Evander, too, will place you near his throne ;
And show mankind, ev'n on this shore of being,
That virtue still shall meet its sure reward.

Phil. I am rewarded : feelings, such as mine,
Are worth all dignities ; my heart repays me.

Eva. Come, let us seek Timoleon ; to his care
I will commend ye both : for now, alas !
Thrones and dominions now no more for me.
To thee I give my crown : yes, thou, Euphrasia ;
Shalt reign in Sicily. And, oh ! ye Pow'rs,
In that bright eminence of care and peril,
Watch over all her ways ; conduct and guide
The goodness you inspir'd ; that she may prove,
If e'er distress like mine invade the land,
A parent to her people ; stretch the ray
Of filial piety to times unborn,
That men may hear her unexampled virtue,
And learn to emulate " The Grecian Daughter."

THE END.

[illegible]

KNOW YOUR OWN MIND



MILAMOUR — VASTLY WELL —

ACT IV.

SCENE I

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KNOW YOUR OWN MIND;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS

FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

KNOW YOUR OWN MIND

WILLIAM SAVAGE, PRINTER,
LONDON.

REMARKS.

Mr. Murphy, in his prologue to this drama, assured the audience, that it should be his last—and he kept his word. He dreaded a decrease in reputation by courting too long the favour of the Muses; in whose service, wearied by incessant labour, he perceived he should soon lose that poetic ardour, the indispensable requisite for all their successful votaries.

The reception which “Know your own Mind,” obtained from the town, the admiration it gained, both for its characters and dialogue, might have tempted a less discreet man than the author, to have ventured once more his credit as a dramatist: but with all the flattering joy he received from this play, its high repute, its great attraction, there quickly arose an event in the theatrical world, which changed all his laudable pride into humility; and every delight of a prosperous author, to a certain degree of repining.

That well-known star in the dramatic firmament, which outsparkles every other, “The School for Scandal,” made its first appearance at Drury Lane; whilst “Know your own Mind,” was in the zenith of its power at Covent Garden.

The author of the last named comedy, has been heard to say, that he could have borne, without regret, the brilliancy of a rival drama, which had wholly extinguished the blaze of his own; but that he felt a poet's peevish pang on being outshone just at that very identical time, and just upon his own identical subject.

The reader will observe, before he has proceeded far in the following play, that an inclination to scandal is the prominent trait of the first character of the piece, Dashwould; that the wit of the whole composition depends chiefly upon descanting on the faults of the absent; and that the hypocrisy of Malvil, joined to his love of slander, gives him many of the features, in miniature, of Joseph Surface and Mrs. Candour.—“There was one solitary comfort in all my chagrin on this occasion,” Mr. Murphy has been heard to say; “My comedy was brought out first; if it had chanced to have appeared a few months after Mr. Sheridan's, I should have had the additional mortification of being accused of plagiarism.”

But although of these two comedies the corner stones are nearly the same, their superstructures are almost wholly different. Fable, incidents, and even most of their characters, are totally unlike. Still, an unhappy contour makes the present play continually bring to memory the play of “The School for Scandal,” to its own disadvantage; whilst “The School for Scandal,” which rises in value by the

comparison, never once brings to recollection "Know your own Mind."

To an unfortunate accident like this, which befell Mr. Murphy, every author is, of course, liable; but that two unfortunate accidents, of the very same kind, should befall the same unfortunate author, in the space of a few years, is somewhat extraordinary: and yet it is certain, that Mr. Murphy's comedy of "All in the Wrong," in which *jealousy* is the prevailing passion of every character, was performed under all the disadvantages that could arise from the concurrent representation of Mr. Colman's "Jealous Wife."

With all that merit which the reader will acknowledge in the comedy before him, he will find, in the characters of Mrs. Bromley, and her niece, that the author has there sunk into a sentimental common place, and whining insipidity; degrading to his usual novelty and spirit. It is not only very customary in plays and novels, but very unjust, to delineate a benefactor mostly cruel, and a dependant always patient. Ingratitude is, surely, a crime much more general than that of tyranny. Few minds have strength to support, with fortitude, the weight of obligations—less virtue is requisite for bestowing with generosity: and when faults arise between the giver and the receiver of benefits, suspicion should ever be awake to him or her who has the most perilous duty to perform. "To love our enemies," seems like a severe ordinance; and yet, to many susceptible but arrogant

minds, the harder precept is—to love our friends.—But, granting that a protector is sure to be a tyrant; there is a character in compact with him, more hateful, more detestable still—the wretch, who takes his bribe to be a slave.

Millamour, and Lady Bell, are both admirable persons on the stage; although the reader, who never saw them there, may not conceive them to be so; for these whimsical lovers, and all the occurrences in which they are concerned, are such, as depend upon action more than upon words. The exposure of Millamour's verses, by the three different females at the same time—his pleasant unsteadiness of resolution upon every new desire that assails him, and his final rapturous submission to the melody of Lady Bell's vocal talents, are all incidents highly to be improved by countenance and gesture—in which the actor's colouring alone, brings forth the author's true design.

DRAMATIS PERSONA

- MILAMOUR
- DASHWOOD
- MAVIA
- BYRON
- CAPTAIN BYRON
- SIR JOHN MILAMOUR
- SIR HARRY LOWWIT
- CHARLES
- SEBASTIAN
- LADY HEDDERLEY
- LADY JANE
- MISS BRONLEY
- MISS NEVILLE
- MADAME LA ROUGE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MILLAMOUR
DASHWOULD
MALVIL
BYGROVE
CAPTAIN BYGROVE
SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR
SIR HARRY LOVEWIT
CHARLES
SERVANTS

Mr. Elliston.
Mr. Bannister.
Mr. Palmer.
Mr. Powell.
Mr. De Camp.
Mr. Eyre.
Mr. Holland.
Mr. Fisher.
{ *Mr. Webb.*
{ *Mr. Evans.*

LADY BELL
LADY JANE
MRS. BROMLEY
MISS NEVILLE
MADAME LA ROUGE

Mrs. Jordan.
Miss Mellon.
Miss Pope.
Miss Boyce.
Miss Tidswell.

KNOW YOUR OWN MIND.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR'S House.

Enter SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR and BYGROVE.

Bygrove. Why, then, I'd marry again, and disinherit him.

Sir J. Brother Bygrove, you think too severely in these matters.

Bygrove. Severely, Sir John? If I had a mind that my son should marry, why should not he do as I would have him?

Sir J. Allowance must be made for inclination.—The success of our children depends upon the manner, in which we set them out in the world. They are like bowls, which, if delivered out of hand, with a due regard to their bias, our aim is answered;—if otherwise, they are short or wide of the mark in view, or perhaps rush wildly out of the green.

Bygrove. Well argued, truly! he, that should obey, is to judge for himself, and you, that are his governor, are to be directed by him!

Sir J. Why, he is chiefly interested in the end; and the choice of the means may be fairly left to himself. I can't but be tender of George, a plant of my own rearing, and the tree will hereafter be known by its fruit.

Bygrove. It is a tree that will bear nothing without grafting; and if I could not inoculate what will make it thrive and flourish, it should not encumber a foot of my land.

Sir J. Your system and mine, differ widely, brother Bygrove. My son is of an enlarged and liberal understanding, and I a father, of mild authority.

Bygrove. Authority! your son's word is a law to you. Now, there is my young graceless—he is in the army, and why? Because I chose it—I had a mind he should serve, and so he went to be shot at.—No arguing with me—If I see any thing wrong, I accost him directly:—"Lookye, sir, do you think to go on in this fashion? Not during my life, I promise you: I will acknowledge you no longer than you prove worthy, and if you can't discern what is befitting you, I, at least, will judge what is proper on my part.

Sir J. Well, George and I have lived together as friends—From a boy, I endeavoured to subject him rather to his reason, than his fears. If any little irregularity happened, he was no sooner sensible of it, than his cheek coloured, and the blush of youth not only looked decent, but expressed an ingenuous, and well-disposed mind.

Bygrove. But the consequence of all this?—Has he a settled opinion—a fixed principle, for a moment? He is grown up in caprice; his judgment has not vigour to be decisive upon the merest trifle; he is distracted by little things, and of course, is perishing by little and little.

Sir J. Oh no, all from a good cause: his knowledge of life occasions quick reflection, quick reflec-

tion shows things in a variety of lights. I am not angry—He will settle in the world—you will see him married before long.

Bygrove. In what a variety of lights his wife will appear to him!

Sir J. I beg your pardon for a moment.—I see a person there—Charles, Charles! this way.

Enter CHARLES.

Sir J. Well, Charles, what is he about?

Charles. Very busy, sir, a thousand things in hand.

Bygrove. And all at the same time, I'll warrant?

Charles. We have a deal to employ us, sir.

Sir J. Have you sounded him, in regard to what I mentioned last night?

Charles. That's what I wanted to tell your honour. Last night, sir, as he was going to bed, I touched upon the subject—dropped a hint or two, that it is now time to think of raising heirs to himself—enlarged upon the comforts of matrimony, and I think, with no small degree of eloquence.

Bygrove. The fellow is laughing at you.

Sir J. Well, and how?—What effect?

Charles. A very visible effect, sir. This morning, early, my master rings his bell—"Charles," says he, "I have been considering what you said last night:—I shall pay a visit to the young ladies, and, I believe, I shall marry one of them."

Sir J. There, Mr. Bygrove—I am for ever obliged to you, Charles—Well, go on.

Charles. I fly immediately, to get him his things to dress, and return in an instant. "Charles," says he, then tossed himself back in his chair, beat the ground with his heel, and fell a reading. Won't your honour get ready, to visit the young ladies?—"The ladies?—what ladies, you blockhead?"—Lady Bell, and Lady Jane, your honour, Mrs. Bromley's handsome nieces.—"Po! you're a numskull," says he, with an oblique

kind of a smile—stretched his arms, yawned, talked to himself, and bade me go about my business.

Bygrove. I knew it would end so. He will continue going on from one thing to another, and end in nothing at last.

Sir J. This is provoking! Any body with him this morning?

Charles. He has had a power of people with him, sir—A commission broker, to sell him a company in a marching regiment—the mayor of a borough, about a seat in parliament. And there are several with him now, sir. There is Sir Harry Lovewit, and——

Bygrove. Ay! Sir Harry! I am glad he is of age, and that I am no longer his guardian—He has not had a new idea in his head since he was five years old, and yet the blockhead affects to be lively. He runs after wits, who do nothing but laugh at him.—He repeats scraps and sentences—all memory and no understanding—a mere retailer of what falls from other people, and with that stock, he sets up for a wit.

Charles. He is with my master, sir; and there is Mr. Malvil, and Mr. Dashwould, and—[*Bell rings.*]—He rings, sir—you will pardon me, I must begone, sir. [Exit.]

Bygrove. And that fellow, Dashwould! he is the ruin of your son, and of poor Sir Harry into the bargain. He is the Merry Andrew of the town; honour has no restraint upon him, truth he sets at naught, and friendship he is ever ready to sacrifice to a joke.

Sir J. Po! mere innocent pleasantry—Dashwould has no harm in him.

Bygrove. No harm in him? I grant you the fellow has a quick sense of the ridiculous, and draws a character with a lucky hit—But every thing is distorted by him. He has wit to ridicule you—invention to frame a story of you—humour to help it about; and

when he has set the town a laughing, he puts on a familiar air, and shakes you by the hand.

Enter SIR HARRY LOVEWIT, laughing violently.

Sir H. Oh! oh! oh! I shall certainly expire one day, in a fit of laughing.

Sir J. What's the matter, Sir Harry?

Bygrove. What fool's errand brings him hither?

Sir H. That fellow, Dashwould, will be the death of me.—The very spirit of whim, wit, humour, and raillery possess him.

Bygrove. Ay; wit and humour for the meridian of your understanding.

Sir H. By the shade of Rabelais! he is the most entertaining creature! He has played off such a firework of wit!—I'll tell you what he said this moment——

Bygrove. No, sir, no; if you are a pedler in smart sayings, and brisk repartees, we don't desire you to unpack for us.

Sir H. A plague on him, for an agreeable devil!—And then the rogue has so much ease!

Bygrove. Yes, the ease of an executioner—He puts all to death, without remorse—He laughs at every thing, as if Heaven intended to make its own work ridiculous. He has no relish for beauty, natural or moral. He is in love with deformity, and never better pleased, than when he has most reason to find fault.

Sir H. There is a picture of as harsh features as any in Dashwould's whole collection.

Bygrove. But the picture is true—no exaggeration in it.

Sir H. He gave us a miniature of you, this morning, my dear guardian, and you shall have it. Dashwould has made a discovery, Sir John—What reason do you think he gives, for Mr. Bygrove's railing for ever at your son's inconstancy of temper?

Bygrove. Ay, now! now!

Sir H. You positively shall hear it. Mr. Bygrove's desires being all rusted to a point, looking directly toward the land of matrimony——

Bygrove. Matrimony! now gild the pill with humour, and down it goes.

Sir H. Dashwould has found you out. Mr. Bygrove's desires being all collected, and fixed on matrimony, he rails at the variety of my friend Millamour's whimsies, like Sir George Bumper, with chalkstones on his knuckles as big as nutmegs, hobbling along, and thanking Doctor le Fevre, that he has no small humours flying about him.

Sir J. That's a discovery indeed!

Bygrove. Sir John, can you mind what such a fellow as Dashwould says? Every thing that passes through the medium of his fancy, appears deformed, as the straightest stick looks crooked in troubled water.

Sir H. Well dashed out, upon my soul!—with tolerable spleen, and some vivacity.

Bygrove. Po! if you had taken my advice, Sir Harry, and renounced his acquaintance long ago, you had been now a young man coming into life, with some promise of a character. Continue in dissipation, sir: For my part, it is a rule with me, neither to give, nor to take, a joke.

Sir J. Ha! ha! ha! a pleasant rule, positively—ha! ha! ha! Dashwould shall have it this moment; do you take the consequence, and in the mean time I'll leave you to the practice of your social humour.

[Exit.]

Bygrove. It is such coxcombs as that butterfly, that encourage him to fix his pasquinades upon every man's character. Matrimony! a licentious—No, Sir John, I still cherish the memory of your sister—she was the best of wives——'Sdeath! interrupted again by that—No, it's my friend Malvil; he is a man of true value.

Sir J. Dashwould says, he is a compound of false charity, and real malice.

Bygrove. And it is enough for you, that Dashwould says it. Malvil is a man of honour, sir, and an enemy to all scandal, though wit prove a palatable ingredient in the poison.

Enter MALVIL.

Malvil. Intolerable! there is no being safe where he is—A licentious railer! all truth, all morality sacrificed to a jest! nothing sacred from his buffoonery!

Bygrove. I told you, Sir John, how it is.

Malvil. Oh, such indiscriminate satire! There is no enduring it. Ridicule is a very unfair weapon, Mr. Bygrove; it is, by no means, the test of truth, Sir John.

Sir J. Nay, but you are too grave about this matter.

Malvil. Too grave! shall he wantonly stab the reputation of his neighbour, and then tell you he was in jest? For my part, I had rather throw a veil over the infirmities of my friend, than seek a malicious pleasure in the detection—That's my way of thinking.

Sir J. I fancy you are right. This son of mine does so perplex me! [*Walks aside.*]

Malvil. Pray, Mr. Bygrove, give me leave—I am sorry to hear certain whispers about a friend of ours.

Bygrove. About whom? the widow, Mrs. Bromley?

Malvil. Oh, no, no! I have a great respect for her, though I—Pray, don't you think she throws out the lure for a young husband?

Bygrove. For a husband—yes, but not too young a one—you can serve my interest in that quarter.

Malvil. I know it; rely upon my friendship. But have you heard nothing of an eminent Turkey merchant?

Bygrove. Mr. Freeport?

Malvil. I say nothing—I don't like the affair:—have you really heard nothing?

Bygrove. Not a syllable.

Malvil. So much the better; though it is fit you should be put on your guard. Any money of yours in his hands?

Bygrove. Po! as safe as the bank.

Malvil. I may be mistaken—I hope I am—I was in company the other night—several members of parliament present—they did not speak plainly—hints and inuendo's only—you won't let it go any further?—His seat in the house, they all agreed, is perfectly convenient at this juncture—I hope the cloud will blow over. I shall remember you with the widow.

Bygrove. One good turn deserves another; I shan't be unmindful of your interest.

Malvil. There, now you hurt me—you know my delicacy: must friendship never act a disinterested part? I esteem you, Mr. Bygrove, and that's sufficient. Sir John, give me leave to say, the man who busies himself about other people's affairs, is a pragmatical character, and very dangerous in society.

Bygrove. So I have been telling Sir John: But to laugh at every thing is the fashion of the age. A pleasant, good-for-nothing fellow, is, by most people, preferred to modest merit. A man like Dashwould, who runs on—So! here comes Scandal in folio.

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. Sir John, I rejoice to see you—Mr. Bygrove, I kiss your hand. Malvil, have you been uneasy for any friend since?

Malvil. Po! absurd!

[*Walks away.*]

Dash. I have been laughing with your son, Sir John.—Pray have I told you about Sir Richard Doriland?

Bygrove. You may spare him sir, he is a very worthy man.

Dash. He is so—great good nature about him—I love Sir Richard: You know he was divorced from his wife, a good fine woman, but an invincible idiot.

Malvil. Lookye there now, Mr. Bygrove!

Bygrove. My Lady Doriland, sir, was always accounted a very sensible woman.

Dash. She was so; with too much spirit to be ever at ease, and a rage for pleasure, that broke the bubble as she grasped it. She fainted away, upon hearing that Mrs. Allnight had two card tables more than herself.

Bygrove. Inveterate malice!

Dash. They waged war a whole winter, for the honour of having the greatest number of fools, thinking of nothing but the odd trick.—First, Mrs. Allnight kept Sundays; her ladyship did the same—Mrs. Allnight had forty tables; her ladyship rose to fifty—Then one added, then t'other, till every room in the house was crammed like the black hole at Calcutta; and at last, upon casting up the account, Sir Richard sold off fifteen hundred acres, to clear incumbrances.

Sir J. Ridiculous! and so they parted upon this?

Dash. Don't you know the history of that business?

Malvil. Now mark him—now.

Dash. Tender of reputation, Malvil!—The story is well known. She was detected with—the little foreign count—I call him the Salamander—I saw him five times in one winter upon the back of the fire, at Bath, for cheating at cards.

Malvil. Go on, sir, abuse every body. My lady was perfectly innocent: I know the whole affair—a mere contrivance to lay the foundation of a divorce.

Dash. So they gave out. Sir Richard did not care a nine-pin for her, while she was his.—You know his way; he despises what is in his possession, and languishes for what is not. Her ladyship was no sooner married to——what's his name?—His father was a footman, and Madam Fortune, who, every now and

then loves a joke, sent him to the East Indies, and in a few years brought him back at the head of half a million, for the jest's sake.

Malvil. Mr. Dashwould, upon my word, sir—Families to be run down in this manner!

Dash. Mushroom was his name; my Lady Doriland was no sooner married to him, but, up to his eyes, Sir Richard was in love with her.—He dressed at her—sighed at her—danced at her; she is now libelled in the Commons, and Sir Richard has a crim. con. against him in the King's Bench.

Malvil. Pshaw! I shall stay no longer, to hear this strain of defamation. [Exit.]

Dash. Malvil, must you leave us? A pleasant character, this same Mr. Malvil.

Bygrove. He has a proper regard for his friends, sir.

Dash. Yes, but he is often present where their characters are canvassed, and is anxious about whispers, which nobody has heard. He knows the use of hypocrisy better than a court chaplain.

Bygrove. There, call honesty by a burlesque name, and so pervert every thing.

Dash. Things are more perverted, Mr. Bygrove, when such men as Malvil make their vices do their work, under a mask of goodness; and with that stroke we'll dismiss his character.

Sir J. Ay, very right; my brother Bygrove has a regard for him, and so change the subject. My son, Mr. Dashwould, what does he intend?

Dash. Up to the eyes in love with Lady Bell, and determined to marry her.

Sir J. I told you so, Mr. Bygrove—I told you, you would soon see him settled in the world. Mr. Dashwould, I thank you; I'll step and confirm George in his resolution. [Exit.]

Dash. A goodnatured man, Sir John, and does not want credulity!

Bygrove. Ay, there! the moment his back is turned!

Dash. Gulliver's Travels is a true history, to him! His son has strange flights.—First, he was to be a lawyer—bought chambers in the Temple, eat his commons, and was called to the bar. Then the law is a damned, dry, municipal study; the army is fitter for a gentleman; and as he was going to the war-office, to take out his commission, he saw my Lord Chancellor's coach go by; in an instant back to the Temple, and no sooner there, "Po! pox! hang the law! better marry, and live like a gentleman." Now marriage is a galling yoke, and he does not know what he'll do. He calls his man, Charles—sends him away—walks about the room, sits down, asks a question—thinks of something else—talks to himself, sings, whistles, lively, pensive, pleasant, and melancholy, in an instant. He approves, finds fault; he will, he will not; and, in short, the man does not know his own mind for half a second. Here comes Sir John.

Enter SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR.

You find him disposed to marry, Sir John?

Sir J. I hope so, he wavers a little, but still I——

Bygrove. Po! I have no patience—my advice has been all lost upon you—I wish it may end well. A good morning, Sir John. [Going.]

Dash. Mr. Bygrove, yours: Sir John will defend you in your absence.

Bygrove. If you will forget your friends in their absence, it is the greatest favour you can bestow upon them. [Exit.]

Dash. Did I ever tell you what happened to him last summer, at Tunbridge?

Sir J. Excuse me for the present. This light young man!—I must step and talk with my lawyer.

Dash. I'll walk part of the way with you. A strange medley, this same Mr. Bygrove: with something like

wit, he is always abusing wit. You must know, last summer, at Tunbridge——

Sir J. Another time, if you please. [Exit.]

Dash. The story is worth your hearing: a party of us dined at the Sussex—— [Following SIR JOHN.]

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. Mr. Dashwould! Mr. Dashwould!

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. What's the matter, Charles?

Charles. My master desires you won't go.

Enter SIR HARRY LOVEWIT.

Sir H. Hey! what, going to leave us?

Dash. Only a step with Sir John. Strange vagaries in your master's head, Charles!—Sir Harry! going to wait upon Miss Neville, I suppose—She has beauty, and you have a heart.

Sir H. Pshaw! there you wrong me now! Why will you?

Dash. Very well, be it so; I can't see, to be sure, but take my word for it, you will marry that girl.—Come, I follow you.

Sir H. I must not part with you—I had rather lose the whole college of physicians. [Exit.]

Dash. March on, Sir Harry. [Turns to CHARLES.] Did you ever see such a baronet! This fellow, Charles, is as ridiculous himself as any of them. [Exit.]

Charles. Now have I but one man in the house, and he will be fifty different men in a moment!—Hurry! hurry! nothing but hurry! Get me this—get me that—get me t'other—bring me the blue and silver, scoundrel!—what do you fetch me this for?—let me have the brown and gold. A poor servant does not know which way to turn himself in this house.

Enter RICHARD.

Well, Richard, what are you about?

Richard. Why, a man in a whirlwind may as well tell what he is about. Going to order the coachman to put up. He intends to change his dress, and walk to the Temple. [Exit.

Charles. What does he mean by talking of the Temple again? I hope we are not going to take to our studies once more. I hate the law: there is not a footman in the Temple has a grain of taste. All mere lawyers! They have not an idea out of the profession.

Enter ROBERT.

Robert. Richard! Richard! where is he gone?

Charles. What's in the wind now?

Robert. The wind's in another quarter. He has been writing verses, as he calls them, ever since the company left him. He has torn a quire of paper, I believe, and now he wants the carriage directly.

[Exit.

Charles. Run, and order it. I had rather be a country curate, than go on in this manner. [Bell rings.] What is he at now?

Millamour. [Within.] Charles!——who answers there?

Charles. Ay; now for the old work.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. Is the chariot ready?

Charles. At the door, sir.

Mil. Do you step to Mrs. Bromley's, and——perhaps it would be better to——No, do you step, Charles, and——you need not mind it——another time will do as well. [Exit.

Charles. There again now! this is the way, from morning to night.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. The sooner, the better : I promised Sir John, and I will pay this visit. Lady Bell reigns sovereign of my heart. That vivacity of mind ! “ Quick as her eyes, and as unfix’d as those.”

Charles. She is by far preferable to her sister, your honour.

Mil. Po ! you are illiterate in these matters. The sober graces of Lady Jane !—Lady Bell advances like a conqueror, and demands your heart : Lady Jane seems unconscious of her charms, and yet enslaves you deeper.

Charles. Which of them does your honour think—

Mil. Which of them, Charles ? *[Reads a Paper.]*
“ I look’d, and I sigh’d, and I wish’d I could speak.”

Enter ROBERT.

Robert. Captain Bygrove, sir.

Mil. That’s unlucky ! I am not at home ; tell him I went out an hour ago.

Enter CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

My dear Bygrove, I longed to see you. But why that pensive air ? Still in love, I suppose.

[Exeunt CHARLES and ROBERT.]

Capt. B. My dear Millamour, you have guessed it. I am in love, and glory in my chains.

Mil. Shall I tell you a secret ? I suspect myself plaguily. Every thing is not as quiet here as it used to be.

Capt. B. Indulge the happy passion. Let wits and libertines say what they will ; there is no true happiness, but in the married state.

Mil. Why, I have thought much upon the subject of late, and, with a certain refinement, I don’t know but a man may fashion a complying girl to his taste

of happiness. Virtuous himself, he confirms her in her virtue; constant, he secures her fidelity: and, by continuing the lover, instead of commencing the tyrant husband, he wins from her the sweetest exertion of tenderness and love. I shall most positively marry. Who is your idol? My dear boy, impart.

Capt. B. There I beg to be excused. You know my father. I must not presume to think for myself. I must contrive some stratagem, to make him propose the match. Were it to move first from me, I should be obliged to decamp from before the town at once.

Mil. I wish you success. My resolution is taken, and with the most amiable of her sex. She romps about the room, like one of the graces; and deals about her wit with such a happy negligence——

Capt. B. An agreeable portrait; but mine is the very reverse. That equal serenity in all her ways! Wit she has, but without ostentation; and elegance itself seems the pure effect of nature.

Mil. [*Aside.*] I don't know whether that is not the true character for a wife. And pray, what progress have you made in her affections?

Capt. B. Enough to convince me that I am not quite unacceptable. My dear Millamour, I had rather fold that girl in my arms, than kiss his majesty's hand for the first regiment of guards.

Mil. I am a lost man. I shall most positively marry. We will wonder at each other's felicity; and be the envy of all our acquaintance.

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. I am as good as my word, you see. Most noble Captain, your father was here this morning. A good agreeable old gentleman, and about as pleasant as a night mare. Millamour, whom do you think I met since I saw you?

Mil. Whom?

Dash. Our friend Beverley, just imported from Paris, perfectly frenchified, and abusing every thing in this country—"Oh! there is no breathing their English atmosphere.—Roast beef and liberty will be the death of me!"

Mil. Ha! ha! poor Beverley! I saw him, last summer, at Paris, dressed in the style of an English foxhunter: he swore there was not a morsel to eat in their country: kept an opera-singer upon beef-steaks and oyster sauce; drove to his villa every Saturday, in a phaeton, and returned on the Monday, like a young buck, just come upon town.

Dash. He has done his country great honour abroad.

Capt. B. He will settle at home now: he is going to be married.

Dash. Yes, I hear he is in love, and much good may it do him. I wish I may die, if I know so ridiculous a thing as love!—"My life!—My soul!—Hybla dwells upon her lips; ecstasy and bliss! blank verse, and pastoral nonsense!" In a little time, the man wonders what bewitched him: an arm chair after dinner, and a box and dice till five in the morning, make all the comforts of his life.

Mil. Very true! Love is a ridiculous passion indeed.

Capt. B. Do you take up arms against me? But a moment since, just as you came in, he was acknowledging to me——

Mil. No, not I, truly; I acknowledge nothing. Marriage is not to my taste, I promise you. The handsome wife!—she is all affectation; routs, drums, hurricanes, and intrigue!

Dash. And the ugly! she makes it up with good sense; pronounces upon wit; and talks you dead with maxims, characters, and reflections.

Mil. And the woman of high birth! she produces

her pedigree, as her patent for vice and folly. "Seven's the main," and away goes your whole fortune!

Capt. B. Mere common place.

Dash. And the tender maukin! she dotes upon you. "Don't drink any more, my dear:" "You'll take cold, near that window, my love;" "Pray don't talk so much; you'll flurry your spirits"—And then kisses you before company.

Mil. And the sick madam! she has the vapours, and finds that she has nerves.—"I wish I had none.—But it is too true, that I have nerves, as slight as so many hairs."

Dash. Ha! ha! the whole sex is divided into so many classes of folly.

Mil. Right! so it is. Ha! ha! ha! [*Both laugh.*

Capt. B. You play finely into one another's hands.

Mil. Now mark the champion of the sex!—

Dash. Yes; he'll throw down the gauntlet for them. [*Both laughing.*

Capt. B. Nay, decide it your own way. Since you won't hear, gentlemen, there is a clear stage for you. [*Exit.*

Dash. Fare ye well, most noble Captain! A facetious companion! did you ever hear him say any thing?

Mil. He is in for it; and my father would fain reduce me to the same condition, with one of Mrs. Bromley's nieces. A good fine woman, Mrs. Bromley!

Dash. Has been! Were she now to rub her cheek with a white handkerchief, her roses and lilies would go to the clear starcher.

Mil. Ha! ha! and yet she sets up for the rival of her nieces.

Dash. The young ladies are pretty well in their way too. Lady Bell has a brisk volubility of nothing, that she plays the pretty idiot with: and Lady Jane, a sly piece of formality, ready to go post for

Scotland, with the first red coat, that asks her the question. We all dine at the widow's to-day? are you to be with us?

Mil. Yes, to meet you: the party will be diverting.

Dash. Observe old Bygrove. He pronounces with rigour upon the conduct of others, and hopes his own follies lie concealed. His whole struggle is to escape detection. He hoodwinks himself, and thinks he blinds you. Positive and dogmatical in his opinions, yet a dupe to the designs of others: and, flattering himself that a peevish and censorious spirit hides every defect, he gives you the full ridicule of his character.

Mil. I have marked him before now.

Dash. Mark him with the widow: you will see him sighing for his deceased wife and Mrs. Bromley's charms at the same time. One eye will weep for the dead, and the other ogle the living.

Mil. Ha! ha!—And then Malvil laying siege to Miss Neville!

Dash. Miss Neville is the best of them. Mrs. Bromley has taken her into her house, as a poor relation, whom she pities; and her pity is no more than the cruel art of tormenting an unhappy dependant upon her generosity.

Mil. But she has generosity. She has promised Miss Neville a fortune of five thousand pounds.

Dash. And so the hook is baited for Malvil. The widow flings out that snare, to counteract Sir Harry.

Mil. Sir Harry!

Dash. Yes; he is in love with Miss Neville; and the best of the story is, he is afraid I shall think him ridiculous. If I say the word, and promise not to laugh at him, he breaks his mind at once. Miss Neville sees clearly that he admires her, and, of course, will never listen to Malvil. The self-interested designs of that fellow shall be disappointed.

Mil. Admirable ! thou art a whimsical fellow. Come, I attend you. A pleasant groupe they are altogether. It is as you say,

Our passions sicken, and our pleasures cloy ;
A fool to laugh at, is the height of joy. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Room in MRS. BROMLEY'S House.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY and MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. Brom. Why, to be sure, Neville, there is something in what you say : one is so odd, and so I don't know how, in a morning.

Miss Nev. Certainly, madam ; and then people of your turn, whose wit overflows in conversation, are liable to a waste of spirits, and the alteration appears sooner in them.

Mrs. Brom. So it does : you observe very prettily upon things. Heigho ! I am as faded as an old lute-string to-day.

Miss Nev. No indeed, madam, you look very tolerably, considering.

Mrs. Brom. [*Aside.*] Considering ! she grows pert, I think.—I am glad you think me not altogether intolerable.

Miss Nev. Ma'am !

Mrs. Brom. Tolerably ! she is Lady Bell's prime agent. [*Aside.*] Has Sir Harry given you hopes lately ?

Miss Nev. Sir Harry ! I really don't understand why he is mentioned.

Mrs. Brom. Do you think it will be a match ? And have you made up your quarrel with Lady Bell ?

[*Sits down.*]

Miss Nev. The sweetness of her disposition reconciles every thing.

Mrs. Brom. And is Millamour reconciled to Lady Bell ?

Miss Nev. There was only a slight mistake, which I explained.

Mrs. Brom. Oh ! you explained ? that was prudently done ; I am glad to hear this : and do you think he loves her ? Tell me ; tell me all. Why ? why do you think he loves her ?

Miss Nev. He cannot be insensible to her merit ; and the other day he asked me if you were likely to approve of his proposing for Lady Bell.

Mrs. Brom. And you told him——Well !—what did you tell him ?

Miss Nev. That you, no doubt, would be ready to promote the happiness of so amiable a young lady.

Mrs. Brom. You told him so ? [*Rises, and walks about.*] And so you are turned match-maker : you busy yourself in my family ?—Hey !—Mrs. Start-up ! you are dizen'd out, I think : my wardrobe has supplied you.

Miss Nev. Your pardon, ma'am : I had these things in the country, when you first showed so much goodness to me.

Mrs. Brom. What airs ! you know I hate to see creatures give themselves airs. Was not I obliged to provide you with every thing ?

Miss Nev. You have been very kind; I always acknowledge it.

Mrs. Brom. Acknowledge it! Does not every body know it?

Miss Nev. Yes, ma'am, I dare say every body does know it.

Mrs. Brom. That's maliciously said: I can spy a sneer upon that false face. You suppose I have made my brags. That's what lurks in your ambiguous meaning. I deserve it: deliver me from poor relations!

Miss Nev. [*Aside.*] Now the storm begins! I am sure I have said nothing to offend you. I am helpless, it is true, but your relation, and by that tie a gentlewoman still.

Mrs. Brom. I made you a gentlewoman. Did not I take you up in the country, where you lived in the parsonage house, you, and your sister, with no other company to converse with, than the melancholy tombstones, where you read the high and mighty characters of John Hodge, and Deborah his wife? While your father's miserable horse, worn to a shadow with carrying double to the next market town, limped about, with a dull alms-begging eye, in quest of the wretched sustenance, that grew thriftily between the graves? Did not I take you out of your misery?

Miss Nev. You did, ma'am. [*In a softened Tone.*

Mrs. Brom. Did not I bring you home to the great house?

Miss Nev. You did, ma'am! [*Weeps aside.*

Mrs. Brom. And I am finely thanked for it! Warm the snake, and it will turn upon you.

Miss Nev. I cannot bear to be insulted thus!

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Brom. So! your spirit is humbled, is it?

Miss Nev. Give me leave to tell you, madam, that when people of superior fortune, whom Providence has

enabled to bestow obligations, claim a right, from the favour they confer, to tyrannize over the hopes and fears of a mind in distress; they exercise a cruelty more barbarous than any in the whole history of human malice.

Mrs. Brom. Is this your gratitude?

Miss Nev. I could be thankful for happiness, if you permitted me to enjoy it: but when I find myself, under colour of protection, made the sport of every sudden whim; I have a spirit, madam, that can distinguish between real benevolence, and the price of riches.

Mrs. Brom. Oh brave! that is your spirit!

Mis Nev. A spirit, give me leave to say, that would rather, in any obscure corner, submit to drudgery, for a slender pittance, than continue to be an unhappy subject, for cruelty to try its experiments upon.

[Weeps.]

Mrs. Brom. I fancy I have been too violent. After all this sour, I must sweeten her a little. Come, dry up your tears: you know I am goodnatured in the main. I am only jealous, that you don't seem to love me.

Miss Nev. Were that left to my own heart, every principle there would attach me to you. But to be dunned for gratitude!——

Mrs. Brom. You are right; the observation is very just: I am in the wrong.——Come, let us be friends; I have a great regard for you, Neville. [*Walks aside.*] The creature should visit with me, only she looks so well.——How! did not I hear Mr. Malville's voice? yes, it is he; I am visible; I am at home; show him in. Walk in, Mr. Malvil.

Enter MR. MALVIL.

Malvil. To a person of sentiment, like you, madam, a visit is paid with pleasure.

Mrs. Brom. You are very good to me. Neville, do you step and bring me the letter, that lies upon my

table. [*Exit Miss NEVILLE.*] I am obliged to go out this morning. [*Smiles at MALVIL.*] She looks mighty well: I have been speaking for you: our scheme will take. Sir Harry will not be able to rival you: she will be your reward for all your services to me.

Malvil. Your generosity is above all praise, and so I was saying this moment, to Mr. Bygrove: he is coming to wait on you.

Mrs. Brom. That's unlucky! I wanted to have some talk with you: well, have you seen Millamour?

Malvil. Yes, and I find him apt: I have hopes of succeeding.

Mrs. Brom. Hush!—not so loud!—you think me mad, I believe. May I hazard myself with that wild man?

Malvil. Your virtue will reclaim him. I have a friendship for Millamour, and that is my reason for counteracting the designs of my friend Bygrove.—Mr. Bygrove has desired me to speak favourably of him to to your ladyship.

Mrs. Brom. Oh! but he kept his last wife mewed up in the country; I should certainly expire in the country.

Malvil. Why, I can't say much for a country life: you are perfectly right. Rooks and crows about your house; fox-hounds in full cry all the morning; the country'squires as noisy at dinner as their own hounds; disputes about the game; commissioners of turnpikes, justices of the peace, and pedigrees of horses! "Oroonoko, brother to White Surry, got by Brisk Lightning, his dam by Bold Thunder."—That's the whole of their conversation.

Mrs. Brom. Deliver me! it would be the death of me! But don't tell Mr. Bygrove: amuse him with hopes.

Malvil. He is a very worthy man. I am sorry to see some oddities in him; but that is very common in life. Vices always border upon virtues. Dash-

would says,—but there is no believing his slander;—he says Mr. Bygrove's sorrow for his deceased wife, is all mere artifice, to weep himself into the good graces of another. But I don't believe it.

Mrs. Brom. I hear him coming. Do you go and take care of your interest with Neville.

Malvil. I obey your commands. [Going.]

Mrs. Brom. I shall make her fortune five thousand. Be sure you speak to Millamour. Go, go; success attend you. [Exit MALVIL.]

Enter MR. BYGROVE.

Bygrove. [Bowing.] Madam!

Mrs. Brom. This attention to one in my forlorn state is so obliging——

Bygrove. It is a favour on your part to receive a lost, dejected, sprightless——

Mrs. Brom. I admire your sensibility, Mr. Bygrove. That tender look, which you are for ever casting back to a beloved, but irrecoverable object, shows so amiable a sorrow! oh! there is something exquisite in virtuous affection.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Nev. Is this the letter you want, madam?

[Gives it her.]

Mrs. Brom. I thank you, Neville. Yes, there is a luxury in hankering after a valuable person, who has been snatched away. I have found a pleasing indulgence in contemplations of that sort; have not I, Neville?

Miss Nev. Ma'am!

Mrs. Brom. Ma'am! are you deaf? Are you stupid? I was telling Mr. Bygrove, what a taking I was in, when poor dear Mr. Bromley died.

Miss Nev. I was not with you then, ma'am.

Mrs. Brom. Was not with me! what memories some

folks have!—Go, and try if you can recover your memory: leave the room.

Miss Nev. Ungenerous narrow-minded woman!

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Brom. Oh! you little know what a profusion of goodness I have lavished on that creature. She returns it all with sullenness, with ill-humour, with aversion. She perfectly remembers the affliction I was in, when I lost the best of men.

Bygrove. I have had my trials too. Heigho!

Mrs. Brom. I beg your pardon: I am recalling your afflictions: you should not give way; you should struggle a little. Heaven knows how I have struggled. I have appeared, indeed, with an air, but it was all struggling. [*Looks, and smiles.*] I could divert you this morning. Do you know that your son is in love with Lady Jane!

Bygrove. In love! has he said any thing?

Mrs. Brom. I don't know as to that; but I can see what is working in his heart. He is above stairs now: I don't half like his choice: Lady Bell is the proper match for him, and her fortune is the best. An estate, you know, must come to her, by the family settlement. You should direct his choice.

Bygrove. This comes of his presuming to think for himself. Has he declared himself?

Mrs. Brom. I fancy not; but he hinted something to me, about a match in my family.

Bygrove. [*Looks at her, and smiles.*] Why, a match in your family has diverted me of late—Heigho!—It is the only thing that has entertained me for a long time.

Mrs. Brom. I have had my fancies too. I should like to talk further, but I am engaged abroad, this morning. Can I set you down? Will you trust yourself with me?

Bygrove. You encourage a smile, madam.

Mrs. Brom. We shall be the town talk: but let them

talk: what need we mind? I will just step and say a word to Neville—You should not be too solitary.

Bygrove. So my friends tell me.

Mrs. Brom. I shall be with you in a moment. [*Returns.*] Do you know that we are very like each other in our tempers? After all, that is the true foundation of lasting friendships. Poor, dear Mr. Bromley! [*Going, returns.*] It was similitude of temper brought us together; and if ever I could be prevailed upon again, similitude of temper must do it. Well, you have diverted me this morning. Here comes your son; talk to him now. [*Exit.*]

Enter CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Bygrove. Well, sir, what brings you to this house?

Capt. B. A morning visit, sir; merely to kill half an hour.

Bygrove. There is nothing I hate so much as hypocrisy. I know your errand; you must pretend to be in love.

Capt. B. I, sir!

Bygrove. What have you been saying to Lady Jane? I thought I had cautioned you against presuming to think for yourself.

Capt. B. You have been very kind in that way.

Bygrove. See what comes of your friend Milla-mour's being left to his own discretion. The ass in the fable, divided in his choice, and still doubting on, till it is too late to resolve, gives but a faint image of him.

Capt. B. And if I, sir, to avoid his irresolution——

Bygrove. You are in the opposite extreme: he thinks too much, and never decides. You never think at all, and so resolve without judgment. Take the advice of your friends before you come here to play the antic tricks of love; to kneel, cringe, fawn, flatter, and make yourself ridiculous. Do you know enough of the world to judge for yourself? Can you tell what

they are all doing in the gay sphere of life? The young are all bred up under the veterans of vice and folly. They see their mothers, with autumnal faces, playing the agreeable, and forgetting that they are no longer young. The men are advanced beyond all former bounds, and the women press close after them. A club for the ladies! intrepidity is now the female charm: to complete their career, there is nothing left but to build a turf coterie, at Newmarket, and ride their own matches, over the four-mile course.

Capt. B. An admirable picture, sir! Dashwould could not colour it higher.

Bygrove. Dashwould! an indiscriminate railer! I speak for your good; and remember, I tell you, you know nothing of the world. After all, sir, Lady Bell is the person I wish to see you married to;—go, and pay your addresses to her. I will settle that matter for you: you may then marry the person, to whom you have not degraded yourself, by pining, sighing, love verses, and I know not what.

Capt. B. This is all unaccountable to me, sir. If you will but hear me——

Enter MR. MALVIL.

Bygrove. No, sir, no; I won't allow you to fetch a single sigh, till I say the word; when I give leave, you may then go and sigh till your heart is ready to break. I'll hear no more; no parleying with me. Leave the house, this moment.

Capt. B. I obey.

[*Exit.*

Malvil. I interrupt you.

Bygrove. No, no; I am glad to see you. Well, have you had any opportunity with the widow?

Malvil. I have; she surprises me a little: she has dropped the mask. I did not think she had been so eager to marry. We had some talk about you. You know my heart: I am always true to my friends: I

see but one difficulty: she will never agree to live in the country.

Bygrove. The lover need not dispute that point, whatever the husband may do hereafter.

Malvil. Very true; and besides, though I am not inclined, with the malicious part of the world, to suspect her virtue, yet this town has temptations. It grieves me to see the ways of this great city; fine women without principle; friends without sincerity: marriages to-day, divorces to-morrow; whole estates set upon the cast of a die; masquerades without wit or humour; new comedies, that make you cry, and tragedies, that put you to sleep: It grieves me to see all this. You are in the right to prefer good sense and tranquillity in the country.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY and MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. Brom. I beg your pardon, gentlemen. Neville, mind what I say to you: don't let those giddy girls go out in my absence; to walk in the Green Park, or run to hideous painters, under pretence of seeing odious pictures, that they may have an interview with more odious originals. Keep them at home; I will reward your pains. Allons, Mr. Bygrove. [*Exit BY-GROVE.*] Come, Mr. Malvil.

Malvil. Had not I better stay, and——

Mrs. Brom. No, no; come now, you may return to her. [*Exit.*]

Malvil. [*To MISS NEVILLE.*] You see that I am torn from you; but I shall return as soon as possible. [*Exit.*]

Miss Nev. Tyrannical woman! some virtues she has; but they are overshadowed by their opposite qualities. Her love of praise, is a gross appetite of flattery. She oppresses with kindness, and her very civilities are sure to be disobliging. Oh! state of dependence! for mere support, to be subject every hour to caprice and arrogance!—Is it pride that makes me

feel with this sensibility? No, my heart can answer it is not. I can bow to the hand that relieves me; but I cannot stoop to the servile office of pampering vanity and ostentation, with low and fulsome flattery. What does Lady Bell mean by talking to me of Sir Harry? She does it—I know her goodness—she does it to soften affliction, and, if possible, divert a mind, depressed with sorrow. Sir Harry never threw away a thought on me: He behaves, indeed, with marked civility, but I don't know what to think of him.—I must not aspire too high—no, I have no pretensions.

Enter LADY JANE.

Lady Jane. Miss Neville, I am very angry with you. What is the matter? Has any thing made you uneasy?

Miss Nev. No; I am not remarkable for high spirits, you know.

Lady Jane. Why would not you give us your company?—How can you be so cross? That sister of mine is the veriest madcap!

Miss Nev. Lady Bell is rather lively to be sure!

Lady Jane. But when she once begins, she hazards every thing, and talks sometimes like a very libertine.

Miss Nev. The overflowing of gaiety, and good humour.

Lady Jane. I wish she would restrain herself a little—Madam la Rouge is with her; she has the sweetest point eyes ever beheld! I was endeavouring to cheapen it, but Lady Bell was so troublesome! she called me a thousand prudes, and will have it, that nothing runs in my head but a lover.

Miss Nev. I don't know but she may be right—We are apt to deceive ourselves: We talk of vapours, and fidgets, and retirement, but it is often artful, sly, insinuating man, that lurks at the bottom.

Lady Jane. Well, I vow you'll make me hate you!

Miss Nev. Has Captain Bygrove made no disturbance in your heart?

Lady Jane. How can you? You are as great a plague as my sister.—As I live and breathe, the giddy romp is coming! You must take my part.

Enter LADY BELL.—Repeating:

*Yes, I'm in love, I own it now,
And Cælia has undone me;
And yet, I swear, I can't tell how,
The pleasing plague stole on me.*

What would I give to have some miserable swain talk in that style of me? “Belinda has undone me;”—charming!

Miss Nev. A lively imagination is a blessing, and you are happy, Lady Bell.

Lady Bell. I am so; but then I am not talked of; I am losing all my time.

Lady Jane. Why, you bold creature! I hate to hear you talk with so much intrepidity.

Lady Bell. Prudery, my dear sister! downright prudery! I am not for making mysteries of what all the world knows.

Lady Jane. And how do I make mysteries, pray?

Lady Bell. Why, you confident thing, I'll prove it against you.

Lady Jane. But what—what—what will you prove?

Lady Bell. That you are ready to jump out of your little wits, for a husband, my demure, sober sister. Miss Neville, a poet is not more eager for the success of a new comedy, nor one of his brother poets more desirous to see it fail, than that girl is to throw herself into the arms of a man.

Lady Jane. All scandal, sister.

Lady Bell. Miss Neville shall be judge.

Lady Jane. Your story is mere invention.

Lady Bell. Was there ever such a wrangler!

Lady Jane. You'll not make good your words.

Lady Bell. [*Pats her Hand.*] Hold your tongue, Miss, will you?

Lady Jane. Very well, go on.

Lady Bell. Will you have done? Now mind, Miss Neville; She does not want to be married, she says. The other night, my young madam, whose thoughts are always composed and even, went to sleep as soon as we got to bed, and then her busy imagination went to work with all the vivacity of an intriguing chamber-maid.

Lady Jane. And how can you tell that, pray?

Lady Bell. Out of your own mouth you shall be judged: Miss Neville, she talked in her sleep, like a beauty in a side-box, and then fell a singing,

No, no, he is true, and I believe ;

He look'd, he sigh'd, he can't deceive ;

No no, I have conquer'd ; he is mine ;

My heart is touch'd, and I resign.

Lady Jane. Oh, you scurrilous creature!

Miss Nev. Fairly caught, Lady Jane.

Lady Jane. All odious slander! you judge of me by yourself.

Lady Bell. I do so: I mean to be married, and am frank enough to own it: But you may let "concealment feed on your damask cheek." My damask cheek, I hope, was made for other purposes.

Lady Jane. Gracious—there is no bearing this! What a mad girl you are!

Lady Bell. Not in the least; A natural character. One would not, to be sure, tell a hideous man, that one loves him: but, when one has encouraged him by degrees, and drawn him on, like a new glove, and perhaps, done him a mischief in the doing it, why then one would draw him off again, and may be, ask a

pretty fellow to help a body; and then the wretch looks so piteous, and kneels at your feet!—then rises in a jealous fit—“I take my everlasting farewell! never to return—no, never! what! to her? who encouraged me?—encouraged him? who promised?—broke her promise? The treacherous, faithless, dear, deluding”——Then returns in an instant; hands dangling—eyes imploring—tongue faltering—“Lady Bell,—Lady Bell—when you know that I adore you!”——And I burst out into a fit of laughter in his face: Oh, that’s my joy—my triumph—my supreme delight!

Lady Jane. And is not there a kind of cruelty in all this?

Lady Bell. Oh, your very humble servant, my sweet Lady Graveairs! Cruelty! The difference between you and me, sister, is this; you deny your love to your female friends, and own it to the man; now I deny it to him, but among ourselves, I fairly own, that Miss Neville is not more impatient to be married to Sir Harry, than I to——

Miss Nev. Who, I? Spare me, I beg of you!—Why Sir Harry?

Lady Jane. Now, now, your turn is come; Never spare her, sister.

Miss Nev. You must excuse me, I am not in spirits for all this raillery. [Going.]

Lady Jane. You shan’t leave us.

Miss Nev. Give me leave—I beg you will. I’ll go and talk to Madam La Rouge: Perhaps I may succeed for you. [Exit.]

Lady Jane. Well, if you must go.—How you run on, sister! And are you really in love?

Lady Bell. Over head and ears.

Lady Jane. With whom?

Lady Bell. Not with Captain Bygrove:—How alarmed you are!—With Millamour, sister.

Lady Jane. Fix that roving temper, if you can; he

will be on his knees to you, and the first pair of black eyes that enters the room, will be through his heart.

Lady Bell. As to that, I give myself very little trouble; but if I could once catch him paying his adoration to me, my aunt Bromley does not raise and sink poor Miss Neville's spirits, with such exquisite skill in the art of tormenting, as I should his. I should use him as the men do their punch; a little more sweet; a little more sour; a little more spirit; more acid again; then, perhaps, say it's good for nothing, and then, perhaps——

Lady Jane. What?

Lady Bell. Sip it up at last, as you would do at first. You wicked girl! how could you ask me such a question? Law! what am I about? I have a thousand things to do.

Enter MISS NEVILLE and MADAM LA ROUGE.

La Rouge. Ah! my lady! always so gay! English climate no effect upon you. De manieres de Paris for all de vorl. En verite, vous est charmante.

Lady Bell. Oh, Madam La Rouge, you say such polite things! but you rob me of all my money.—My sister is rich, you had better deal with her. Sister, you'll be married before me. [Sings.

No, no, he is true, and I believe, &c. [Exit.

Lady Jane. Was ever any thing so crazy!

La Rouge. It is all vivacite! and, my lady, you have ver great wit en partage; vous avez les graces; you have de grace; but you no deal vid me.

Lady Jane. I shall call at your house in Pall-mall. Miss Neville, you joined against me! I am very angry with you. [Exit.

La Rouge. Mademoiselle, I tell you, persuade my lady to have de lace, and you come to my house, me give you ver pretty present.

Miss Nev. Oh, you have a national talent for applying a little bribery.

La Rouge. Diantre; 'tis false delicatessen. You not know de manieres of de vorl. Ah! Monsieur Malvil!

Enter MALVIL.

Malvil. Madam La Rouge, I did not expect this pleasure.

La Rouge. It is always pleasure to see mes amis;—to see my friends, and I glad to see you here vid de lady.—You have ver good choice; and I can tell you, make de despatch—you have rival.

Malvil. Rival!

La Rouge. You not know? Sir Harry have taste as well as you. Mademoiselle, you are ver great favourite.

Miss Nev. A favourite! keep your vivacity for some other subject; don't make me the town talk.

La Rouge. It is ver true: He come to my house in Pall-mall, and say ver fine ting of Mademoiselle Neville, and Monsieur Dashwould praise you ver much.

Malvil. [*Aside.*] Ay, his malice is at work.

La Rouge. Monsieur, you lose all your time:—
[*Goes to him, and speaks low.*] You wait de fortune from Madam Bromley: Sir Harry vil take her vidout any money at all. Vat you slow for?

Malvil. Are the apartments kept ready at your house?

La Rouge. De apartment it is ready. You take it two, tree week ago, and pay de rent for noting—I leave you vid de lady, and I go mind mes affairs. Bon voyage. [*Exit.*

Malvil. I have disengaged myself, to have the honour of attending you.

Miss Nev. Your attention is thrown away. Did not I hear Mr. Millamour's voice?

Malvil. Yes, he came with me; he is gone into the

next room, to pay his compliments to Lady Jane. I am sorry to see him for ever distracted—always resolving, and yet every day beginning the world over again. You look chagrin'd, what has disturbed you?

Miss Nev. The old story ; Mrs. Bromley's eternal whims.

Malvil. She is not spoken of as I could wish. Goodnatured and arrogant, generous and cruel, obliging and oppressive, at the same time.

Miss Nev. There cannot, surely be a more distressful situation than to remain under daily obligations, and yet not be able to esteem our benefactress.

Malvil. Your delicacy charms me—It has fixed me yours : I long for nothing so much, as to see you out of her power. They have a strange report about town—people will be talking : the whisper goes, that Mr. Bygrove, amidst all his grief, is slily in a hurry for another wife. Mrs. Bromley, they say, encourages him, and, at the same time, has a design upon my friend Millamour.

Miss Nev. The world is not always wrong.

Malvil. Malice will be busy, and does not spare the young ladies.

Miss Nev. If any thing is said to their disadvantage, believe me, they do not deserve it.

Malvil. I dare say not ; I don't think they are too forward. I am sorry to see, in one of the papers, to-day, a character of Sir Harry, not at all favourable : His little follies, his whims, and caprices, one does not mind : He may walk in Dashwould's train as long as he pleases, that only makes him ridiculous : But it grieves me to hear that perfidy stains his character, and, as I am told, the worst of perfidy : the ruin of beauty and innocence, is his ruling passion.

Miss Nev. This is very odd ; somebody has been at the trouble of sending me an anonymous letter, to

that very effect: and why to me? I am not able to decypher.

Malvil. I don't like anonymous letters; In general they aim at mischief; but this, perhaps, is meant as a caution to you: It must be a friend that sent it.

Miss Nev. No, I can guess the quiver from whence that arrow comes.

Malvil. Dashwould, perhaps?

Miss Nev. I don't say that.

Malvil. Nor I, I never charge any body; but, upon recollection, the letter in the newspaper is imputed to him. Mrs. Bromley, I know, has no opinion of Sir Harry: His designs, with regard to you, she does not think honourable. My heart interests me for you; You know I am all heart. The plan which Mrs. Bromley has proposed——Hark! I think I hear Millamour coming—I'll follow you up stairs.

Miss Nev. Oh, sir! you have frightened me out of my wits! [Exit.

Malvil. She loves Sir Harry, I see, and yet she shan't slip through my hands. I can set on Mrs. Bromley, to lead her a weary life, and if I can prevail upon Millamour to renounce Lady Bell, and marry the widow, my business is done. When Miss Neville is heartily tormented by Mrs. Bromley, affliction softens the mind, and I may then decoy her away, and stand upon terms with the family: But Dashwould's wit will fly about.—No matter, he is a sad scoundrel, and does not mind how he murders reputations. So, here comes Millamour! I must get clear of him, and talk further with Miss Neville.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. From this moment I blot all other women from my memory. Malvil, wish me joy—The perplexity of choice is now at an end.

Malvil. Why, what has happened?

Mil. Lovely Lady Jane! "And yield her charms of mind with sweet delay."—I can't stay to tell you now.

Malvil. Nor will I stay to interrupt your raptures: You know, I wish you success. [Exit.

Enter LADY BELL, reading,

*Who yields too soon, must soon her lover lose,
Would you restrain him long? then long refuse.*

Mil. [Looks at her, and smiles.] There is something commanding in that air of vivacity.

Lady Bell. [Reads.] *Oft at your door let him for entrance wait,*

There let him——

How! Millamour here! how could you surprise me so? You horrid thing! how long have you been here?

Mil. Been, madam? I have been—I have been in the next room, paying my respects to your sister.

Lady Bell. And never inquired for poor Lady Bell?

Mil. Your ladyship wrongs me. You do injustice to your own charms: they can never be forgot.

Lady Bell. I see how it is: the other day you was listed in my service, and now a deserter to my sister! you are right, you would have been upon hard duty with me.

Mil. Any duty but a forlorn hope would be——

Lady Bell. Hope! why, sure you would not have had the intolerable assurance, to entertain the smallest degree of hope? My sister, I suppose, has given you some hope: Ay, that's her way, she moves by settled rules, and shines with equal light.—Now I—I am a mere comet, I blaze of a sudden—dazzle for a while, then wheel away, and am thought of no more.

Mil. That gaiety of hers is charming! [*Aside.* The impression your ladyship makes——

Lady Bell. Words, mere words; No, I am a strange piece of wild nature, never the same for two minutes together. Now my sister, she is a Prussian blue, holds her colour, and is always the same. I—I am a more changeable silk; I shift about, and display my wit, and my folly, so curiously blended, that nobody can tell where one begins, or the other ends. I am not worth your notice.

[*Walks, and hums a Tune.*

Mil. [*Looking at her.*] She has described herself admirably; without variety, a woman is a downright piece of insipidity.

Lady Bell. Yes, I have my whims—Never the same for two minutes together; Now I love to give a scope to folly, and the men say, “Curse catch her, she pleases more when in the wrong, than other women when they are in the right.” Then good sense is the word, and the next moment I can’t bear the fatigue of thinking—why won’t somebody write a comedy, to divert me? Then all spirit, and I long to lead up the ball.

*Ladies, like variegated tulips show,
'Tis to their weakness all their charms they owe.*

[*Sings, and walks about.*

Mil. [*Aside.*] Lady Jane is mere mediocrity compared to her!

Lady Bell. Lord, I run on at a strange rate!—Yours, Mr. Millamour. Au revoir. [*Going.*

Mil. A moment longer—You must not leave me: You possess my heart; possess it without a rival.

Lady Bell. Hey! what’s the matter now?

Mil. Do not trifle with a passion sincere as mine. I adore you, my Lady Bell;—adore your matchless charms; thus on my knees adore——

Lady Bell. Stay, stay; let me see what the poet says. *[Reads quick.*

*Oft at your door, let him for entrance wait,
There let him kneel, and threaten, and entreat.*

There, stay there, don't offer to stir: Now put up both your hands, and—pray, pray have compassion, *Lady Bell.* *[Exit, laughing.*

Mil. She flies, disdainful, from her lover's view,
Yet looks and bids him, as she flies, pursue. *[Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MRS. BROMLEY'S.

Enter LADY JANE and CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Lady Jane. And laid his commands upon you to address my sister?

Capt. B. Most peremptorily.

Lady Jane. You have obeyed him, I hope?

Capt. B. You know your power too well; you know that I am devoted to you, and that my happiness depends upon the promise you have made me.

Lady Jane. There, that is always the way with you

men: our smiles are sure marks of approbation, and every thing we say is construed into a promise.

Capt. B. And have not you promised?

Lady Jane. [Looks at him, and smiles.] Need I answer that question? How easily frightened you are! but you have some reason to be alarmed: Millamour has been on his knees to me, breathing such raptures——

Capt. B. Ay! who has set him on?—what can be at the bottom of this? And have you listened to him? Here comes Dashwould; he, perhaps, can explain.

Lady Jane. He will only laugh at us, and so I'll make my escape. [Going.]

Capt. B. Not to hear Millamour again, I hope.

[Takes her Hand.]

Lady Jane. Well, well, to purchase my liberty, you need not fear. I have received his vows, delivered with such ardour!—how terrified you look!—I have listened to him, to alarm my sister, with an idea of Millamour's growing passion for me: If her jealousy is once touched, it may fix her resolution; at present, she is as volatile as Millamour himself.

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. As volatile as Millamour! what can that be? I never knew any thing that would bear a comparison.

Lady Jane. What think you of my sister?

Dash. Lady Bell has her whims; I left her above stairs, in close conference with Millamour; he has deserted your ladyship already.—Mrs. Bromley will be the next, I hope: Your father, Captain, would grieve more for that, than for his deceased wife.

Lady Jane. And then Miss Neville's turn may come.

Dash. Oh, no; To sport with her would be inhumanity; but a brisk widow is fair game.

Capt. B. Yes, and it may help to cure my father of his folly.

Lady Jane. It would be sport, but I despair of it. You know, Mr. Dashwould, you allow that Millamour has understanding?

Dash. But he does not act from his understanding.—Fits and starts of passion govern him. If, in any one pursuit of real use, he had half the alacrity of mind, with which he runs on from one folly to another he would be a man for the ladies to pull caps for: But he lives for ever in inconsistencies. One action of his life is the sure forerunner of the contrary—First, Malville is his favourite—then arm in arm with me. Can any two things be more opposite? It is the same among the ladies; they all have him by turns, and the whim of one moment is sure to find a ridiculous antithesis in the next.

Lady Jane. He sat for that picture, I'll swear.—Well, there's a gentleman wants your advice, and so I'll leave you together. [Exit.

Capt. B. My dear Dashwould, you must assist me!

Dash. What distresses you?

Capt. B. My evil genius is at work. You know what my father has resolved upon? Lady Bell is the person he chuses for me.

Dash. I know all that business: a counterplot of the widow's fertile brain, to disappoint Lady Bell, and wreak her malice on Millamour.

Capt. B. But the malice falls on me only.—Why will not Millamour know his own mind? Lady Bell loves him, I know she does.—I am thwarted in the tenderest point; what must be done?

Dash. Do as they would have you—you ensure success: Millamour's jealousy takes fire upon the first alarm, and while the passion holds, he will have vigour enough to act decisively.

Capt. B. May I hazard the experiment?

Dash. It's a sure card; take my advice.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Nev. Mrs. Bromley's coach has just stopped at the door: had not you better step up stairs, gentlemen?

Enter SIR HARRY LOVEWIT.

Sir Harry. Dashwould, you are absent too long; They are all as dull as a funeral, above stairs.

Dash. [*Aside to* CAPTAIN BYGROVE.] How the baronet follows Miss Neville from room to room!—Come, Captain, I'll play a game of picquet with you before dinner.—Allons!

[*Exit, with* CAPTAIN BYGROVE.]

Sir Harry. If I might have the liberty, ma'am, to——

Miss Nev. Another time, if you please, Sir Harry.
—Mrs. Bromley is coming—I hear her voice.

Sir Harry. And you promise me the hearing?

Miss Nev. You are entitled to it, sir. I beg you'll leave me now.

Sir Harry. I obey your commands;—I am gone
—you'll remember.

[*Exit.*]

Miss Nev. Here she comes, and, I think, in good humour.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. Brom. Oh, I am heartily tired! I have been paying visits to people, who have never been let into my house, and who, I hope, will never be at home for me.—I hate them all, but out of civility, we must keep up an acquaintance. Where are the girls?—Has nobody been here?

Miss Nev. Mr. Millamour, ma'am, and the rest of the gentlemen that dine here—they are all above stairs.

Mrs. Brom. Stupidity!—Did not I give orders—How long has Millamour been here?

Miss Nev. About an hour.

Mrs. Brom. With Lady Bell, I suppose?—Thou base ingratitude! and Sir Harry is here too, I reckon? Does your match go on?—You shall go back to the country, I promise you.—You'll be the ruin of those girls—They shall have no visitors, when my back is turned.—I'll give orders to all the servants this very moment. [Going.

Enter SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR.

Sir J. To see Mrs. Bromley looking so well——

Mrs. Brom. You are very polite, sir.—Business calls me now, Sir John—I beg your pardon. [Exit.

Sir J. Has my son been here to-day?

Miss Nev. He is above stairs, with Lady Bell, sir.

Mrs. Bromley. [Within.] Miss Neville! Neville, I say!

Miss Nev. You'll excuse me, Sir John—What can she want? [Exit.

Sir J. This visit portends some good, I hope.—I shall be happy, if he has declared himself—I'll step and see what he is about. [Going.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. Exquisite! lovely angel!

Sir J. Well!—how!—what!

Mil. I beg your pardon, sir, I am not at leisure; I am in the third region, and can't descend to the language of the nether world.

Sir J. Then you are in love, George?

Mil. She is a sister of the graces, and surpasses the other three. I am fixed, unalterably fixed, and am going about the marriage articles directly.

Sir J. They are at my lawyer's, ready engrossed, and only wait for the lady's name, to fill up the blanks.

Mil. I know it, sir: I must step for them; I have it through my heart: I feel it here: I am your humble servant, sir. [Going.

Sir J. No, no; do you stay here; I'll step for Mr. Copyhold. The writings shall be here in ten minutes. [Exit.

Mil. The sooner the better, sir.

*Let those love now, who never loved before;
Let those who always loved, now love the more!*

[Sings.] Lol, tol, lol.

Enter MR. MALVIL.

Malvil. Bravo! you seem in prodigious spirits!

Mil. I am so: I am happy in myself, and happy in my friends, and happy in every circumstance, and in tip-top spirits, and—my dear Malvil, yours down to the ground.

Malvil. Methinks, I sympathize with you. When our friends are happy, the sensation is well called a fellow feeling.

Mil. Malvil, I thank you; your turn of mind is formed for lasting friendships. With Dashwould it is all dissipation, and giddy mirth, the mere bubble of pleasure. To you, I may talk seriously. The topic of the day is enough for Dashwould. I can now tell you, that I shall be happy for life. But for Dashwould, I should have been settled long ago. That fellow has led me into a thousand errors.

Malvil. He has his admirers, and not without reason. He thinks me his enemy, but he is mistaken. I never harbour resentment.

Mil. You are growing grave, and I am a flight above common sense at present.

Malvil. Dashwould, notwithstanding all his faults, does hit the mark sometimes. I don't usually laugh at his pleasantry; I don't like to encourage him too

much ; but it must be owned, he is often right. Behind his back, I cannot help being diverted by him. He has a quick insight into characters.

Mil. No want of penetration there.

Malvil. No, no; he says, and perhaps rightly, your lively ladies often want common prudence; and, giddy in the pursuit of pleasure, they are frequently miserable in the end.

Mil. But Lady Bell's good sense, that refinement of understanding——

Malvil. There are false refinements; the shadow for the substance. Who is it that observes, we all discover early symptoms of the disease, by which our minds and bodies go to ruin?

Mil. Po! with Lady Bell there can be no risk.

Malvil. I don't know whether Dashwould is good authority.—You know him best. He says——

Mil. Well!

Malvil. He is a shrewd observer.

Mil. Nobody more so.

Malvil. If he has a regard for any body, it is for you. You are the only man I never heard him speak ill of. A match with Lady Bell is not to his mind. He talked seriously on the subject. Has not he told you?

Mil. Not a syllable.

Malvil. I wonder at that. Lady Bell, he says, shewed herself early. Impatient of advice, attentive to nothing but her beauty! whole days at her looking glass—I repeat his very words—he seemed to speak out of downright regard for you.—At her toilette every feature had its instructions how to look; but no instruction for the mind. And then, says he, that terrible love of gaming!

Mil. Gaming!

Malvil. Don't you know it? I can't say I ever saw it myself. Time will determine her character.

Mil. If she loves gaimng, it is pretty well determined already.

Malvil. Perhaps not: I still hope for the best.

Mil. Why, yes; a man of sense may form her mind, and then the gentler affections may take their turn.

Malvil. The very thing I said.—But our pleasant friend had an answer ready—Gentle affections! says he! don't you see that it is with people that once love play, as with persons addicted to strong cordials? they never return to cooler liquors.

Mil. There is some truth in that. I am for ever obliged to you. It is ingenuous, it is friendly of you to convey the hint.

Malvil. Don't build too much upon it. I have told you my author; and you know his way: he may deny it all.

Mil. Shall I talk to him?

Malvil. I don't know what to say to that. In his vein of pleasantry, he may give it another turn.

Mil. He may so. I am glad to know all this. But my Lady Jane, there's a model for her sex to imitate.

Malvil. Have you watched her well? People should appear what they really are. Let a precipice look like a precipice. When covered over with flowers, it only serves to deceive the unwary. Mrs. Bromley has been very communicative about Lady Jane.

Mil. You alarm me. My dear friend explain.

Malvil. To do Lady Bell justice, she is above disguise. And though she has her faults, I have seen her please by those very faults.

Mil. [Smiling.] And so have I. Her very blemishes are beauty spots.

Malvil. No frankness about the youngest girl. It is friendship for you that makes me speak. Her character is all forced, studied, put on with her rouge.

Mil. Does she paint?

Malvil. A little; the prudent touch. I am sorry for

her. When she is settled in the world, many qualities, which now lie concealed, will break out into open day-light.

Mil. What a masked battery there will be to play off upon a husband!

Malvil. Their aunt told me all in confidence. You may judge how painful it is to her. I have known the family for some time. I can't but be sorry for the young ladies.

Mil. And since this is the case, I don't care how little I know of them, or their family.

Malvil. No occasion to quarrel with the family. Great merit about Mrs. Bromley. She made an admirable wife, and that at an early period. She was but seventeen when she married.

Mil. No more?

Malvil. Not an hour: she is not thirty: an estate in her own right, and the command of half a borough. No opposition there: the old houses have the votes. A man may get a seat without trouble. Does not Sir John want to see you in parliament?

Mil. Yes. It would give him pleasure.

Malvil. Well, you will judge for yourself. Were I as you, I should know what course to take. Here she comes! a good fine woman! a man may there sit down to his happiness at once.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. Brom. Mr. Millamour, [*Courtesies.*] Mr. Malvil, what have you done with Mr. Bygrove?

Malvil. I parted with him where you set us down. [*Speaks to her aside.*] I have talked to Millamour, and I think it will do.

Mrs. Brom. Go you up stairs. [*Aside to MALVIL.*

Malvil. How charmingly you look! like Lady Bell's eldest sister!

Mrs. Brom. Po! you are laughing at me.

Malvil. Not I truly: I appeal to Millamour. I'll

take the liberty to join the company above. [*Aside to MILLAMOUR.*] She is the best of the family. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Brom. A valuable man Malvil is! He has a great esteem for you, sir. His sincerity is unequalled. You seem thoughtful, Mr. Millamour.

Mil. Thoughtful, ma'am!—There are certain subjects that—what Malvil says is true—A man may marry her, and sit down to his happiness at once.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Brom. Sir John has been saying a great deal to me about you.

Mil. Has he, ma'am?—There is a circumstance, which he is as yet a stranger to—a circumstance, which to communicate, will perhaps——It is what I have long wished, and——

Mrs. Brom. Faultering! hesitating! [*Aside.*] I interrupt you.

Mil. There is a circumstance, ma'am—the affair is—My father for a long time——Sir John, for a long time—Sir John has wished——

Mrs. Brom. To see you married?

Mil. To see me married, ma'am—and—he has—he has wished it much.—And a settlement, by way of jointure—long ready for the lady's name—that is—any lady, who shall honour me with her affection—and——

Mrs. Brom. No lady can be insensible of your pretensions.

Mil. You are very good, ma'am; and, after long observation, and a lasting passion grafted on it, which, though silent hitherto, yet working secretly—when disclosed at length—may, to the person in the world—who, already formed by experience, may in every respect—and if, without presuming too far——

Mrs. Brom. What a delicate confusion he is in!

[*Aside.*

Mil. And if this paper, ma'am——

Mrs. Brom. [*Taking the Paper.*] When given by you, sir——

Enter BYGROVE.

Perverse and cruel ! [*Walks aside.*

Bygrove. You both look grave ; nothing amiss, I hope.

Mrs. Brom. Every thing is as it should be, sir.

Mil. [*Aside.*] Not if he knew all.

Bygrove. Sir John has been complaining——

Mrs. Brom. Pass that by ; advise your own son ; had not you better step up stairs ? Mr. Millamour will do what is right. [*Smiling at him.*] You may leave it all to him ; trust to his judgment.

Enter SIR HARRY LOVEWIT.

Sir H. Millamour, I have such a story for you : Malvil and Dashwould have been quarrelling about you, and——

Bygrove. Po ! and here they all come ; I knew the substance could not be far off, when the shadow projected before it.

Enter LADY BELL, DASHWOULD, and MALVIL.

Lady Bell. Mr. Dashwould, do you think I'll bear this ? What liberty will you take next ? You think, because I laugh, that I am not offended.—Aunt, I received a letter, and he has attempted to snatch it from me.

Dash. Why, it brings a little cargo of ridicule from the country, and my friend Malvil sees no joke in it.

Malvil. When my friend's name is brought in question, sir——

Lady Bell. It is diverting, notwithstanding.—Aunt, what do you think ? My cousin, Cynthia, you know, was to be married to Sir George Squanderstock ; her mother opposed it, and broke off the match, and now

it's come out, that she was all the time the clandestine rival of her own daughter!

Mil. Not inapplicable to the present business!

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. Brom. Go, you giddy girl, no such thing!

Mil. [*Aside.*] She charms by her very faults.

Sir H. [*Goes up to BYGROVE.*] And Dashwould has been saying—

Bygrove. Po! repeat none of his sayings to me.

Lady Bell. Did you say any thing, Mr. Dashwould? What was it?

Dash. Oh! nothing. Sir George Squanderstock is my very good friend.

Malvil. And, for that reason, you might spare him. No man is without his faults.

Dash. Ay, allow him faults out of tenderness.

Bygrove. Sir George is a valuable man, sir, and represents his county to great advantage.

Dash. He does so; takes a world of pains; nothing can escape him; Manilla ransom not paid; there must be a motion about that matter: he knots his handkerchief, to remember it.—Scarcity of corn! another knot—triennial parliaments—[*Knots.*] Juries judges of law as well as fact—[*Knots.*] National debt—[*Knots.*] Bail in criminal cases—[*Knots.*] And so on he goes, till his handkerchief is twisted into questions of state; the liberties and fortunes of all posterity dangling like a bed-roll; he puts it in his pocket, drives to the gaming table, and the next morning his handkerchief goes to the wash, and his country and the minority are both left in the suds.

Lady Bell. What a description! [*Laughing.*]

Sir H. Hey! lively Lady Bell! [*Laughing.*]

Mil. Ho! ho! I thank you, Dashwould.

Mrs. Brom. [*Aside to MILLAMOUR.*] How can you encourage him? Let us leave them to themselves.

Malvil. You see, Mr. Bygrove—

Bygrove. Ay! thus he gets a story to graft his ma-

lice upon, and then he sets the table in a roar at the next tavern.

Sir H. Never be out of humour with Dashwould, Mr. Bygrove; he keeps me alive; he has been exhibiting pictures of this sort all the morning, as we rambled about the town.

Dash. Oh, no! no pictures; I have shown him real life.

Sir H. Very true, Dashwould: and now mind him; he will touch them off to the life for you.

Mrs. Brom. Millamour so close with Lady Bell! the forward importunity of that girl.

[*Aside, and goes to MILLAMOUR.*]

Dash. There is positively no such thing as going about this town, without seeing enough to split your sides with laughing. We called upon my friend Sir Volatile Vainlove: he, you know, shines in all polite assemblies, and is, if you believe himself, of the first character for intrigue. We found him drinking Valerian tea for his breakfast, and putting on false calves.

Sir H. And the confusion he was in, when we entered the room!

Dash. In the next room, we found Jack Spinbrain, a celebrated poet, with a kept mistress at his elbow, writing lampoons for the newspaper; one moment murdering the reputation of his neighbours, and the next a suicide of his own.—We saw a young heir, not yet of age, granting annuity bonds, and five jews, and three christians, duped by their avarice to lend money upon them. A lawyer——

Sir H. Hear, hear; it is all true. I was with him.

Dash. A lawyer taking notes upon Shakspeare; a deaf nabob ravished with music, and a blind one buying pictures. Men without talents, rising to preferment, and real genius going to a gaol.—An officer in

a marching regiment with a black eye, and a French hairdresser wounded in the sword arm.

Sir H. Oh! ho! ho! by this light, I can vouch for every word!

Bygrove. Go on, Sir Harry; ape your friend in all his follies; be the nimble marmozet, to grin at his tricks, and try to play them over again yourself.

Sir H. Well now, that is too severe: Dashwould, defend me from his wit. You know I hoard up all your good things.

Dash. You never pay me in my own coin, Sir Harry: try now; who knows but you will say something.

Malvil. Friend or foe, it is all alike.

Lady Bell. [Coming forward.] And where is the mighty harm? I like pulling to pieces, of all things.

Mil. [Following LADY BELL.] To be sure, it is the life of conversation. Does your ladyship know Sir George Squanderstock's sister?

Lady Bell. I have seen her.

Mil. She is a politician in petticoats; a fierce republican; she talks of the dagger of Brutus, while she settles a pin in her tucker; and says more about ship-money, than pin-money.

Bygrove. And now you must turn buffoon?

Dash. I know the lady; she scolds at the loyalists, gossips against the act of settlement, and has the fidgets for magna charta.

Mil. She encourages a wrinkle against bribery; flirts her fan at the ministry, and bites her lips at taxes, and a standing army.

Malvil. Mr. Bygrove, will you bear all this?

Enter MISS NEVILLE, and whispers MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. Brom. Very well, Neville, I'll come presently.
[Exit MISS NEVILLE.]

Malvil. [*Looking at Miss NEVILLE.*] I shall stay no longer. Mr. Bygrove, will you walk? [*Exit.*

Bygrove. No, sir, I shall not leave the enemy in this room behind me: a bad translator of an ancient poet, is not so sure to deface his original, as his licentious strain to disparage every character.

Dash. Sir Harry, he will neither give nor take a joke.

Sir H. No, I told you so.

Bygrove. Let me tell you, once for all, sir——

Dash. I wish you would.

Bygrove. Why interrupt? Do you know what I was going to say?

Dash. No, do you?

Mil. I'll leave them all to themselves. [*Steals out.*

Mrs. Brom. [*Aside.*] Millamour gone! [*Exit.*

Bygrove. And what does all this mighty wit amount to? The wit in vogue, exposes one man; makes another expose himself; gets into the secrets of an intimate acquaintance, and publishes a story to the world; belies a friend; puts an anecdote, a letter, an epigram, into the newspaper; and that is the whole amount of modern wit.

Dash. A strain of morose invective is more diverting, to be sure.

Bygrove. [*Looking about for Mrs. BROMLEY.*] Well, sir, we'll adjourn the debate. You may go on; misrepresent every thing; if there is nothing ridiculous, invent a story: and when you have done it, it is but a cheap and frivolous talent. Has a lady a good natural bloom? her paint must be an expensive article. Does she look grave? she will sin the deeper. Is she gay and affable? her true character will come out at the Commons. That is the whole of your art, and I leave you to the practice of it. [*Going.*

Dash. Satirical Bygrove! now the widow has him in tow.

Bygrove. [*Turning back.*] Could not you stay till my back was fairly turned? [*Exit.*]

Dash. What a look there was!

Lady Bell. At what a rate you run on! you keep the field against them all.

Dash. Sir Harry, step up, and watch him with the widow.

Sir H. I will; don't stay too long.

Dash. I'll follow you: and hark, make your party good with Miss Neville.

Sir H. You see, Lady Bell, a fling at every body! [*Exit.*]

Dash. The baronet does not want parts; that is to say, he has very good materials to play the fool with. I shall get him to marry Miss Neville.

Lady Bell. Bring that about, and you will for once do a serious action, for which every body will honour you.

Dash. In the mean time, do you watch your aunt Bromley: she is your rival.

Lady Bell. Rival! That would be charming.

Dash. It is even so. Now Millamour's understanding is good, but his passion's quick: if you play your cards right——

Lady Bell. Are you going to teach me how to manage a man?

Dash. Coquetry will never succeed with him. A quicksand does not shift so often as his temper. You must take him at his word, and never give him time to change, and veer about.

Lady Bell. Totally out of nature.

Dash. Oh, very well! I give up the point. [*Exit.*]

Lady Bell. You may leave the man to my management. My aunt Bromley rival me! that would be delightful!

Enter LADY JANE.

Well, sister!

Lady Jane. Can you be serious for a moment?

Lady Bell. Well, the solemnity of that look! Must I set my face by yours, and contract a wrinkle, by a formal economy of features, which you, like the rest of the world, mistake for wisdom?

Lady Jane. Will you hear me? They are hurrying this match too fast, I think. Sir John is come, and his lawyer is expected every moment. He wants to conclude the affair this day, and my aunt does not oppose it. But I don't like all this hurry.

Lady Bell. And why need you be concerned about it?

Lady Jane. Do you think Millamour capable of love?

Lady Bell. For the moment. It will be difficult to fix him.

Lady Jane. What would you have me do?

Lady Bell. Do?—Nothing.

Lady Jane. How silly! you know it is not my seeking.

Lady Bell. What are you about? Talking in your sleep again? Lady Jane, wake yourself. What have you taken into your head?

Lady Jane. Why, since Mr. Millamour has prevailed with me——

Lady Bell. His affections, then, are fixed upon you?—Why, the man has been dying at my feet, with a face as rueful as a love elegy.

Lady Jane. You will permit me to laugh in my turn.

Lady Bell. Oh! I can laugh with you, and at you, and at him too. This gives spirit to the business: here are difficulties, and difficulties enhance victory, and victory is triumph.

Lady Jane. Very well! Oh, brave! laugh away! you will be undeceived presently.—If this does not take, I am at the end of my line.

Lady Bell. What does all this mean? Rivalled, out-

witted by my sister ! Insupportable ! This begins to grow serious.

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. 'Sdeath ! she here ! Sir John is quite impatient, and I am going for his attorney.

Lady Bell. And Lady Jane is impatient too : she is the object of your choice.

Mil. Lady Jane ! you are pleasant, very pleasant !

Lady Bell. She has told me with inflexible gravity !

Mil. She is a great wit ; and great wits have great quickness of invention ; and so a story is easily dressed up, I could crack my sides with laughing. If trifling civilities have been received as a declaration of love——

Lady Bell. And is that the case ? Very whimsical indeed !

Mil. Yes, very whimsical ! I am eternally yours, ma'am, and I am on the wing, and your ladyship's adorer. [*Going.*]

Enter LADY JANE.

Lady Jane. [*Aside.*] Now to plague them both.—Sister, you may hear it from himself.

Mil. Confusion !

Lady Bell. That lady, sir, has the strangest notion——

Lady Jane. You will be so good as to explain all to my sister.

Mil. [*Aside.*] Both upon me at once !——I have explained, madam, and all further talk about it is unnecessary.

Lady Bell. Only to satisfy her curiosity.

Lady Jane. To show my sister her mistake.

Mil. [*To LADY JANE.*] I have made every thing clear, ma'am.—[*To LADY BELL.*] Have not I, Lady Bell ? And a—[*Turns to LADY JANE.*] every thing now is upon a proper footing.

Lady Jane. Very well; only give her to understand——

Mil. Your understanding is admirable. [*Turns to LADY BELL.*] I told you she would talk in this style. [*Turns to LADY JANE.*] You are perfectly right, and nobody understands things better. [*Turns to LADY BELL.*] Nobody whatever.

[*Looks and laughs at both by turns.*]

Lady Bell. But give me leave. You must speak out, sir.

Mil. [*Aside to LADY BELL.*] Never argue about it, it is not worth your while.

Lady Jane. There is some mystery in all this.

Mil. No; all very clear: [*To LADY JANE.*] drop it for the present.

Lady Bell. But I desire no doubt may remain.

Lady Jane. And I don't like to be kept in suspense.

[*Both pulling him by the Arm.*]

Mil. Distraction! I am like a lawyer, that has taken fees on both sides. You do me honour, ladies; but, upon my soul, I can't help laughing. It will divert us some day or other, this will. Oh! ho! ho! I shall die with laughing! [*Breaks from them.*]

Enter MRS. BROMLEY and SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR.

Mrs. Brom. What is all this uproar for?

Mil. Another witness of my folly!

[*Runs to the other Side.*]

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. Millamour, I give you joy. Mr. Copyhold, your attorney, is come with the deeds. What's the matter?

Mil. The strangest adventure! I can't stay now. The ladies have been very pleasant. You love humour, and they have an infinite deal. I'll come to you in a moment. [*Exit.*]

Sir J. George, don't run away: let us finish the business.

Dash. If he says he'll marry, you may depend upon him. A poet, determined to write no more, or a gamester forswearing play, is not so sure to keep his word. I wish I may die, if I don't think him as much to be relied upon as a prime minister!

Lady Bell. Aunt! Would you believe it? The demure Lady Jane—[*Bursts into a laugh.*] She has taken such a fancy into her head! Millamour, she thinks, is up to the eyes in love with her.

Mrs. Brom. Ha! ha! ha! poor Lady Jane!

Lady Jane. And my sister's pride is hurt. She carries it with an air, as if she had made a complete conquest.

Mrs. Brom. How ridiculous the girls are! your son has opened his mind to you, Sir John?

Sir J. He has, and I approve of his choice. I hope it is as agreeable to you, as to his father.

Mrs. Brom. I don't know how to refuse my consent.

Enter BYGROVE, listening.

Bygrove. What does all this mean?

Dash. As I could wish. There he is.

[*Seeing BYGROVE.*

Mrs. Brom. Since it has your approbation, Sir John, I believe I must yield my consent. I never thought to marry again, but since you will have it so——

Sir J. Lady Bell, I understand, is willing to do me the honour of being my daughter-in-law.

Lady Bell. Oh! ho! ho! ho! this makes amends for all. My dear aunt Bromley, are you imposed upon? Did you listen to the traitor's vows?—The dear, perfidious?
[*Laughs violently.*]

Dash. He will soon be settled, Sir John, since there are now three rival goddesses contending for him. Mr. Bygrove, you are come in good time.

Bygrove. What fool's part are you to play now?
[*Coming forwards.*]

Mrs. Brom. Sir John, I desire I may not be made your sport. Have not I here, under his hand, a declaration of his mind; here, in this copy of verses, given to me by himself, an earnest of his affection?

Lady Bell. Verses, aunt!

Lady Jane. Verses to you?

Mrs. Brom. Verses to me: only hear, Sir John.
[*Reads.*]

*I look'd, and I sigh'd, and I wish'd I could speak,
And fain would have paid adoration.*

Lady Bell. Stay, stay; mine begin the same way.
[*Takes out a Paper.*]

Lady Jane. The very words of mine.
[*Takes out a Paper.*]

Mrs. Brom. Will those girls have done? [*Reads.*]

But when I endeavour'd the matter to break,

Lady Bell. [*Reads.*] *Still then I said least of my
passion.*

Mrs. Brom. Will you be quiet? [*Reads.*]

*Still then I said least of my passion ;
I swore to myself——*

Lady Bell. [*Reads fast.*] *And resolv'd I would try*

Mrs. Brom. and Lady Bell. [*Reading together.*]

Some way my poor heart to recover.

Lady Jane, Lady Bell, and Mrs. Brom. [Reading eagerly together.]

*But that was all vain, for I sooner could die,
Than live with forbearing to love her.*

Lady Bell. Oh! ho! ho! ho! Mr. Dashwould, what a piece of work has he made?

Dash. And the verses copied from Congreve!

Lady Bell. Copied from Congreve!

[Laughs heartily.]

Mrs. Brom. There, Sir John, there is your son's behaviour!

Dash. There, Mr. Bygrove, there is the widow's behaviour!

Bygrove. And now, Mr. Dashwould, now for your wit.

Mrs. Brom. [To SIR JOHN.] I am not disappointed in the least, sir.

Sir J. I never was so covered with confusion!

Lady Bell. I never was so diverted in all my days!

Dash. He has acted with great propriety upon this occasion.

Mrs. Brom. He has made himself very ridiculous. He has exposed nobody but himself. Contempt is the only passion he can excite. A crazy, mad, absurd——

[Tearing the Paper.]

Lady Jane. An inconstant, wild, irresolute——

[Tears the Paper.]

Lady Bell. Ha! ha! ha! so whimsical a character!

[Kisses the Paper.]

Mrs. Brom. [Throwing the Fragments about.] This behaviour will give him prodigious lustre! He will shine after this! I hope his visits will cease at this house.

Bygrove. [Going up to MRS. BROMLEY.] If ever you marry again, similitude of temper must do it.

Mrs. Brom. Distraction! must you plague me too?

Bygrove. You have appeared with an air, but it was all struggling.

Mrs. Brom. I cannot bear this.

Bygrove. Heaven knows how you have struggled!

Mrs. Brom. And you too? [*Mimics him.*] "A match in your family has diverted me of late." I renounce you all. Come, Lady Bell, Lady Jane, and let us leave them to themselves. [*Exit.*

Lady Jane. You would not believe me, sister.

[*Exit.*

Lady Bell. Oh! this to me is as good as a comedy!

[*Exit.*

Dash. [*To BYGROVE.*] What shall I give you for your chance?

Bygrove. More than I'll give you for your wit. And there's your answer. [*Exit.*

Dash. The old pike is hooked, and struggles still at the end of her line.

Sir J. Mr. Dashwould, speak to this silly young man. You have influence over him. Keep him to dinner. You will for ever oblige me. I must go and pacify the ladies. [*Exit.*

Dash. Poor Milkamour! Dryden has painted him to a hair.

Blest madman, who can ev'ry hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at MRS. BROMLEY'S.

Enter DASHWOULD and SIR HARRY.

Dash. This way, Sir Harry. While they are all engaged in the pleasures of the table, I want a word with you in private.

Sir H. With that face of importance! what is coming now?

Dash. Listen to me: know a little of the subject, before you give your opinion.

Sir H. I am all attention.

Dash. Did you mark Miss Neville, at dinner?

Sir H. You know I did. And when Mrs. Bromley railed at her——

Dash. She railed at her with a littleness of spirit, that disgraced wealth and affluence, and gave to poverty the superior character. You must have seen in the behaviour of that girl, though treated with pride and arrogance, a propriety that was elegant, and went even further; it interested every heart for her. She is the best of the groupe. Were I, at the head of such a fortune as yours, to chuse a wife, she should be the object of my affection.

Sir H. You have some scheme in all this.

Dash. I have; to serve you. I should mortify the pride of Mrs. Bromley, by placing a valuable, but helpless, young lady upon a level with her at once.

Sir H. [*Bursts into a laugh.*] This is to end in some joke!

Dash. Wait for the wit before you laugh. I am in serious earnest. Her understanding is the best among them. The others are all artificial; she is a natural character; and if I am not mistaken, has a heart. If I wanted heirs to my estate, she should be the mother of my children.

Sir H. Were I to be the dupe of all this, how you would laugh at me? Ha! ha! ha! I know you too well.

Dash. Again! laughing without the provocation of a joke. Don't be the dupe of your own cunning. I know you love her; and will it not be a generosity worthy of you, to extricate merit out of distress? Nay, the merit which you admire? The merit which would do honour to the choice of any man in England?

Sir H. Well, I cannot contain! [*Laughs heartily.*]

Dash. What's the matter?

Sir H. The scrape in which you involved Milla-mour with the widow!

Dash. Foolish! that was Malvil's doing. You'll hear more of it by and by. There is an underplot in all his actions. I advise you for the best. Here is a lady in question, untainted by the fashions of the age. Make her your own. She has no fortune; what then? Show yourself superior to the sordid views, that govern the little mercenary spirits of the world.

Sir H. [*Laughs.*] I have just recollected what you said of Jack Invoice, upon his marriage.

Dash. Jack Invoice? He never was intended for any thing but to be laughed at. Upon the death of a rich uncle in the city, he comes to the West-end of the town, with a plumb in his pocket, and not an idea in his head; marries a fantastical woman of rank, and with a sovereign contempt of all his former acquaintance, mixes with lords and people of quality, who win his money, and throw his wig in the fire, to divert

themselves. He laughs at their wit, and thinks himself in good company.

Sir H. Admirable! you have him to a hair!

[*Laughing heartily.*]

Dash. [*Laughing.*] Hey! the picture is like.—
[*Laughs.*] Pretty well, is not it?

Sir H. Oh! ho! ho! the very thing! poor Jack Invoice! you have hunted him down.

Dash. Have I? [*Laughs.*] Yes, I think I have been pleasant upon him. But come; to our point: in marrying Miss Neville, there is nothing ridiculous. You like her, that's clear.

Sir H. But she does not like me, and that's as clear. Somebody has done me a prejudice there. She received this letter, and gave it me to read.

Dash. *To Miss Neville.*—[*Opens it.*] Without a name?

Sir H. A poisoned arrow in the dark.

Dash. [*Reads.*] *Anonymous letters are generally the effect of clandestine malice; this comes from a friend. If your honour, your virtue, and your peace of mind, are worth your care, avoid the acquaintance of Sir Harry. He is the deceiver of innocence, and means to add your name to the list of those whom his treachery has already ruined. Make use of this hint, and act accordingly.*

A pretty epistle—[*Pauses.*] Don't I know this hand?—So, so! I understand it: I can trace this: say no more, Sir Harry: pursue Miss Neville the closer for this. Will you let such a fellow as Malvil, rob you of a treasure?

Sir H. You don't suspect him?

Dash. Leave it all to me. Assure Miss Neville that this shall be cleared up. Hush! we are interrupted! go and join the company.

Enter MR. MALVIL.

Sir H. Pshaw! pox! the company without you—

Dash. Very well; leave me now: [*Exit SIR HARRY.*]
What's the matter, Malvil?

Malvil. It will be over presently: a sudden sensation; I can't bear to see others made unhappy. Mrs. Bromley is a very valuable woman, but at times rather violent.

Dash. And that's much to be lamented, is not it?

Malvil. You may laugh at it, sir, but I think it a serious matter. I left poor Miss Neville in a flood of tears; and——here she comes!

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Dash. Not rising from table so soon?

Miss Nev. Excuse me, sir, I had rather not stay.

Dash. Never mind Mrs. Bromley's humours; come, we will all take your part.

Miss Nev. I am not fit for company, sir.

Dash. I am sorry to lose you: I'll leave you with my worthy friend; he will administer consolation.

[*Exit.*

Miss Nev. Was ever such inhuman tyranny? Insulted before the whole company!

Malvil. It hurts me to the quick. I could not have believed her capable of such violence.

Miss Nev. You saw that I gave her no provocation.

Malvil. It pains me to see what I do.

Miss Nev. She breaks out in such passionate onsets, and never considers that an overbearing pride is the worst of cruelty to an ingenuous mind.

Malvil. There are few who know how to confer an obligation. A disinterested action gives such moments of inward pleasure! Oh! there are moments of the heart, worth all the giddy pleasures of life. One benevolent action pays so amply, and yields such exqui-

site interest, that I wonder people are not fond of laying out their money in that way.

Miss Nev. During the whole time of dinner, it was one continued invective against me.

Malvil. Millamour's behaviour had disconcerted her. But that is no excuse. Goodness by fits, and generosity out of mere whim, can never constitute a valuable character. I am sorry to see you so afflicted.

Miss Nev. You are very good, sir.

Malvil. No, I have no merit in it; the instincts of my nature leave me no choice. I have studied myself, and I find I am only good by instinct. I am strangely interested for you. I have thought much of your situation: our time is short; they will be all rising from table, presently. Attend to what I say: since Mrs. Bromley is so incessant in her tyranny, do as I already hinted to you. Withdraw from this house at once. Madam La. Rouge has an apartment ready for you. You may there remain concealed. In the mean time I shall be at work for you. I shall prevail upon Mrs. Bromley to keep her word, about the five thousand pounds. That added to what is in my power, will make a handsome settlement for you.

Miss Nev. You heard what she said to Sir Harry?

Malvil. She wants to drive you to some act of despair; perhaps to give you up a sacrifice to Sir Harry's loose desires.

Miss Nev. Are you so clear about Sir Harry?

Malvil. [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath! I see she loves him.— Hereafter, I will open a scene to astonish you. [*Pauses, and looks at her.*] You can never be happy under this roof. Mrs. Bromley will make this quarrel up, I know she will. The whole of her virtue consists in repentance, but what kind of repentance? A specious promise to reform her conduct, and a certain return of the same vices.

Miss Nev. She has made me desperate. I can stay

here no longer. I'll go back to the country. I shall there be at peace.

Malvil. You will be there too much out of the way. When you are settled at Madam La Rouge's, the haughty Mrs. Bromley will see to what she has driven you, and for the sake of her character, will begin to relent. Sir Harry must not know where you are. He means your ruin, I am sorry to say it, but I can give you such convincing proof——

Enter MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. Brom. Do you go to your room, madam ; let me see you no more to-day.

Malvil. It was a mere unguarded word that fell from Miss Neville. [*Speaks to MRS. BROMLEY aside.*] Millamour is ashamed of his conduct. He is under my influence still : I shall mould him to your wishes.

Mrs. Brom. [*Aside to him.*] I am a fool to think any more about him. Go to him ; watch him all day ; you will not find me ungrateful. [*Loud.*] And pray tell those girls to come up stairs. [*Exit MALVIL.*] Mighty well, madam. [*To MISS NEVILLE.*] You must sit next to Sir Harry ; you have no pretensions, have you ? and you must vouch for Lady Bell too ? She does not love gaming ; that story is all calumny : bespeak yourself a place in the stage coach ; you shall quit this house, I promise you.

Miss Nev. It will be the last time I shall receive those orders, madam. Your favours are so embittered ; there is such a leaven of pride, even in your acts of bounty, that I cannot wish to be under any further obligations. If doing justice to Lady Bell, if avowing my sentiments in the cause of so amiable a friend, can give you umbrage, I am not fit to remain in this house. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Brom. O brave ! you shall travel. Give her a fortune ! No, let Lady Bell reward her. How !
——Millamour, as I live !

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. Deliver me, fate! she here!—Madam—I—I—you are not going to leave us, I hope?

Enter SIR JOHN MILLAMOUR.

Mrs. Brom. [*Smiling at MILLAMOUR.*] And how can you look me in the face?

Mil. [*Seeing SIR JOHN.*] I am glad you are come, sir, I wanted to—

Mrs. Brom. Perverse! what brings Sir John!—
[*Aside.*]—I shall expect you above stairs, gentlemen. I must try once more to fix that irresolute, inconstant man. [*Exit.*]

Sir J. What a day's work have you made here!

Mil. Sir!

Sir J. Can you expect any good from all this?—For ever doing and undoing. These proceedings are terrible to your father.

Mil. You know, sir, that to gratify you is the height of my ambition.

Sir J. For shame! don't imagine that you can deceive me any longer. Are you to be for ever in suspense? Always resolving, and yet never decided?—Never knowing your own mind for five minutes?

Mil. I have not been hasty to determine.

Sir J. My indulgence has made me too ridiculous. You will force me to tell you my mind in harsher terms than I ever thought I should have occasion to do.

Mil. What has happened to-day, was but a mere frolic, and it has all passed off in a little raillery.

Sir J. And do you think that sufficient? While you remain insensible of your folly, transferring your inclinations from one object to another, hurried away by every casualty, you will prove the jest of all your acquaintance. You will cease to live, before you have begun.

Mil. This is rather too much, sir. If I have, in a few instances, departed from a resolution that seemed fixed, you know very well, it is not uncommon; and when a person means an extraordinary leap, he retires back, to take advantage of the ground, and springs forward with greater vigour.

Sir J. And thus you amuse yourself, compounding upon easy terms, for the folly of every hour. There is no relying upon you.

Mil. After all, sir, it is the prudent part to consider every thing. The ladies were rather hasty in their conclusion. In our moments of reflection, as objects pass before us, opinion will wear different colours.

Sir J. The very cameleon has that merit: but is there to be nothing inward? no self-governing principle? A ship without a pilot, without rudder, or compass, is as likely to avoid rocks and quicksands, as you to steer clear of ruin.

Mil. You seem exasperated; but I really don't see the cause.

Sir J. No!—Can't you feel how absurd it is to be always beginning the world? For ever in a doubt? Day after day embarking in new projects; nay, twenty different projects in one day, and often in an hour?

Mil. Spare my confusion: I feel my folly; I feel it all; and let my future conduct——

Sir J. George, can I take your word? I know you have been at the gaming table.

Mil. The gaming table!

Sir J. Say no more: I know it all: after the indulgence I have shown you, I now see that my hopes are all to be disappointed. If you have a mind to atone for what is past, pursue one certain plan, and be somebody. The time now opens a new scene, and calls for other manners. Reform your conduct, and I shall be happy. But I am tired of this eternal levity: my patience is wore out. I shall stay no

longer in this house, to be a witness of your absurdity. [Exit.]

Mil. I have made myself very ridiculous here.—I can't show my face any more in this family. I'll go back to the Temple, and not marry these ten years. The law leads to great things : a seat in parliament, a vote or two against your conscience, a silk gown, and a judge ; that's the course of things.—I'll pursue my ambition.—Honest friend ! [Calls to a SERVANT.] hist ! honest friend, will you be so good as just to get my hat ?

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. No, I bar hats. What, going to desert us ? The sport is but just beginning. Bygrove has been lecturing his son, and quarrelling with Malvil. The integrity of that honest gentleman is suspected at last. He was the worthiest man in the world this morning, as good a creature as ever was born ; but now he has sold himself to the widow. Lady Bell has been lively upon the occasion ; and Malvil, to support his spirits, has plyed the burgundy, till he looks the very picture of hypocrisy, with a ruddy complexion, and a sparkling eye.

Mil. You may divert yourself, sir ; I have done with them all.

Dash. But I can't part with you—you shall join us ; Malvil shall have no quarter : he will stick to his glass, till his charity for his neighbour begins to stagger ; then off drops the mask : he will have courage enough to rail at mankind, and his true character will come forth, like letters in lemon juice before the fire.

Mil. Po ! absurd ! I am on the rack. Why did you force me to stay dinner ? I have been so weak, so frivolous !

Dash. How so ? Because you changed your mind ?

There is nothing more natural. Don't you see men doing the same thing every day? Down goes the old mansion; a new one rises; exotic trees smile on the landscape, and enjoy the northern air: and when the whole is finished, in less than a twelvemonth, the auctioneer mounts his pulpit.—“Pleasing contiguity;”—“Beautiful and picturesque scene;”—“Delectably featured by nature;”—“Shall I say twenty thousand?”—Down it goes to the highest bidder, who pays his money, and runs away the next morning, with an opera singer, to Italy.

Mil. [*Laughing.*] Why, yes, we see these things every day.

Dash. No doubt; men are fickle and inconstant.

Mil. Very true; it is the way through life, in the lowest rank, as well as the highest. You shan't see a journeyman weaver, but he has his disgust, like a lord, and changes his lodging, his house of call, his barber, and his field preacher.

Dash. Certainly, and then there is a real charm in variety: Besides, what you did to-day, was a mere frolic.

Mil. Nothing more; and that fellow, Malvil, was the occasion of it.—My heart never rightly warmed to that man; I shall never consult him again—Affairs were in a right train, if he had not interposed.

Dash. You shall have your revenge: I have a mine to spring, will blow him up: [*Laughs.*] His advice to-day has served to produce the widow's character.

Mil. Yes, it has given a display of her. [*Laughs.*] How could she think me in earnest? Marry her! I would go into the army sooner!

Dash. A good, pretty trade, the army: if you are killed in battle, it is your affair; if you conquer, you may retire, and live very prettily upon half pay.

Mil. Very true; the law is a more certain road.

Dash. A good, agreeable life, the law is: for ever

entangled in the cobwebs of Westminster Hall, and you help to spin them yourself into the bargain.

Mil. And at the end of twenty years, you are thought a good, promising young man.

Dash. In the mean time, you are constantly hiring out your lungs, and ever in a passion about other people's affairs.

Mil. And travelling circuits, in hopes of finding each county distracted; with a barbarous, bloody murder, in every gaol, and so live upon the calamities of mankind.

Dash. Like physicians, when a north-east wind, a Lord Mayor's feast, or a gaol distemper, has made a good sickly time of it. [Both laugh.]

Enter LADY BELL and LADY JANE.

Lady Bell. Come, sister, leave the men to themselves. Mr. Dashwould, has their wit frightened you away?

Mil. [Looking at her.] "Look in her face, and you forget them all."

Dash. Won't your ladyship have compassion on that gentleman?

Lady Bell. Compassion! my sister and I, we hope for his protection!

Enter CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Capt. B. When you go away from company, Lady Bell, you draw every body in your train.

Lady Bell. Oh, you have so overpowered me with civil and tender things!

Mil. [Aside.] What does he follow her for?

Lady Bell. A l'honneur, gentlemen. [Goes up to MILLAMOUR.] Uncle! Uncle Millamour, when you are married to my aunt, I hope you will be kind to us both. [Courtesies.]

Mil. [Turning away.] Confusion! daggers! daggers!

Lady Jane. [*Courtesying.*] May I salute you, uncle?

Mil. Po! this foolery! [*Walks away.*]

Lady Bell. Let us give him all his titles!—Brother, when you marry my sister——[*Makes a low Courtesy.*]

Mil. How can you, Lady Bell!

Lady Jane. Uncle!—Brother! [*Laughs.*]

Lady Bell. And Brother Uncle! [*Laughs.*]

Mil. [*Breaking away from them.*] This is too much—No patience can endure it. [*Turns to LADY BELL.*] Madam, this usage——

[*LADY BELL and LADY JANE both laugh loud.*]

Lady Jane. Come, sister, let us leave him. [*Exit.*]

Lady Bell. Oh! oh! oh! I shall expire! [*Going.*]

Mil. Why will you torment me thus? [*Takes her by the Hand.*] Am I to be for ever made your sport?

Lady Bell. Oh! you would not have me laugh:—To be sure, when one considers, it is a serious matter! And, though Captain Bygrove [*Pointing to him.*] has orders to be in love with me—and though he has declared himself in the warmest terms——

Mil. And could you listen to him?

Lady Bell. And yet, after all your promises, when you had touched my heart—— [*In a softened Tone.*]

Mil. Jealous of me, by this light! [*Aside.*]

Lady Bell. After all your faithless vows, to break them as you have done, like a Turk, or a Jew, or a Mahometan! [*Crying.*] and leave me, like Dido and Æneas, it is enough to break a young girl's heart! [*Crying bitterly.*] so it is, it is—There, will that please you? [*Bursts into a Laugh.*] Adieu, uncle! my compliments to my aunt. [*Exit.*]

Mil. Damnation!

Enter SIR HARRY LOVEWIT.

Sir H. Did not I hear somebody crying?

Mil. Yes, and laughing too. Captain Bygrove, you said something to Lady Bell, what was it, sir?

Capt. B. What I desire the world to know; I love

her—I adore her! My father has ordered it—Mrs. Bromley approves—Lady Bell encourages me; and I shall be the happiest of mankind.

Mil. You and I must talk apart, sir.—You know my prior claim.—Attempt my life rather than my love.—You must think no more of her, sir; she is mine by every tie, and so I shall tell her, this moment. [Exit.

Dash. Now hold that resolution, if you can.

Capt. B. I have managed it well?

Dash. Admirably!

Sir H. What does all this mean? Dashwould, you are wanted in the next room. Malvil is in for it: he sits toasting Miss Neville, while every idea fades away from his countenance, all going out one by one, and his eye sinks into the dim vacuity of a brisk no meaning at all.

Dash. I'll look in upon them. Bygrove, I see Miss Neville; let us give Sir Harry his opportunity.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Nev. I thought Lady Bell was here: I beg your pardon, gentlemen.

Dash. Your company is always agreeable, is not it, Sir Harry? The gentleman will speak for himself. Come, Bygrove, I have occasion for you.

[Exit, with CAPTAIN BYGROVE.]

Sir H. May I now presume, madam——

Miss Nev. You chuse your time but ill, Sir Harry. I have so many things to distract me, I cannot listen to you now.

Sir H. [Takes her Hand.] But you promised to hear me; I have long beheld your sufferings.

Miss Nev. They do not warrant improper liberties. I can be humble, as becomes my situation. I hope you will not oblige me to show that spirit, which virtue is as much entitled to, as the proudest fortune in the kingdom.

Sir H. I mean you no disrespect. That letter is a black artifice, to traduce my character: the fraud shall be brought to light; you may rely upon it; nor will you be so ungenerous as to believe the dark assassin of my honour.

Miss Nev. I know not what foundation there is for it, nor is it for me to charge you with any thing. I have no right to take that liberty.

Sir H. Why harbour suspicions unworthy of you? In me, you behold a warm admirer, who aspires at the possession of what he loves, and trembles for the event.

Miss Nev. I must take the liberty to doubt your sincerity. I know my own deficiencies, and I beg leave to withdraw.

Sir H. By all that's amiable in your mind and person, my views are honourable as ever yet inspired a lover's heart.

Miss Nev. I would fain express my gratitude.

[Weeps.]

Sir H. Why these tears?

Miss Nev. Your character, I dare say, sir, will come out clear and unsullied. You will permit me to take care of mine. It is all I have to value. I shall not continue any longer in this house. Mrs. Bromley has made it impossible; I wish you all happiness, sir.

Sir H. That resolution I approve of: let me provide you a retreat, and in a few days——

Miss Nev. I must beg to be excused: that I can never think of.

Sir H. By Heaven, I mean to raise you to that independence, which your merit deserves. I would place you in that splendour, which Mrs. Bromley may envy.

Miss Nev. I can only return my thanks. Lady Bell will know where I am. I feel no ambition: I do not want to give pain to Mrs. Bromley: I seek humble content, and ask no more.

Sir H. You do injustice to yourself and me :—Hey ! all breaking up from table !

Miss Nev. You must not detain me now, Sir Harry. I humbly take my leave. [Exit.]

Sir H. I wonder what Dashwould will say to all this. I shall like to hear him : he will turn it to a joke, I warrant him. No end of his pleasantry !

Enter MALVIL, in Liquor, BYGROVE, and DASHWOULD.

Malvil. Very well ; make the most of it. Since you force me to speak, I say her character is a vile one.

Bygrove. Here is a fellow, whom wine only inspires with malice !

Dash. Po ! malice ! Malvil has no harm in him.

Malvil. You may talk of Mrs. Bromley, but she is as vile a character, as pride, and insolence, and avarice, and vanity, and fashionable airs, and decayed beauty, can jumble together.

Bygrove. Here's a return for her hospitality !

Malvil. Marry her, I say ; marry her, and try.

Bygrove. You shall not have a shilling with Miss Neville.

Malvil. There, the secret's out : you want to marry her, and make her break her word. Mankind's a villain ! a medley of false friends, eloping wives, stock-jobbers, and usurers. Wits that won't write, and fools that will. [Sings.]

Bygrove. Dashwould, you are a panegyrist, compared to this man.

Sir H. Yes, he takes your trade out of your hands.

Malvil. She is Mrs. Bromley, the widow, and you are Mr. Bygrove, the widower ; and so, bite the biter, that's all.

Bygrove. His wit soars above you, Mr. Dashwould.

Malvil. Wit is a bad trade. Letters have no friend

left in these degenerate times. Show a man of letters to the first of your nobility, and they will leave him to starve in a garret. Introduce a fellow, who can sing a catch, write a dull political pamphlet, or remarks upon a Dutch memorial, or play off fireworks, and he shall pass six months in the country, by invitation. Mæcenas died two thousand years ago, and you are not historian enough to know it.

Sir H. Dashwould, he makes a bankrupt of you!

Bygrove. I have found him out: I know him now: a pretended friend, that he may more surely betray you. Go, and get some coffee, to settle your head.

[*Exit.*

Malvil. Mrs. Bromley will settle your head.

Dash. Let us take him up stairs; he'll tumble over the tea-table, to show his politeness.

Sir H. [*Taking him by the Arm.*] Come, the ladies wait for us.

Malvil. Mankind, I say, is a villain! [*Sings.*

Enter LADY BELL.

Lady Bell. Bless me, Mr. Malvil!

Malvil. All Dashwould's doing, to expose a body. Do you look to Millamour, that's what I say to you.

Dash. He shan't stay to plague your ladyship.—Come, Malvil, let us go, and be tender of reputation above stairs.

Malvil. I'm always tender, and you are scurrilous.

[*Sings, and exit, led by DASHWOULD and SIR HARRY.*

Lady Bell. How Millamour follows me up and down! Charming! here he comes!

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. Lady Bell, allow me but one serious moment.

Lady Bell. This bracelet is always coming off.

[*Fiddles with it.*

Mil. Whatever appearances may have been, I burn with as true a passion, as ever penetrated a faithful heart.

Lady Bell. [*Aside, and smiling.*] I know he is mine.—This silly, obstinate bauble! What were you saying?—Oh, making love again!

Mil. By this dear hand, I swear——

Lady Bell. Hold, hold, no violence! Give me my liberty—and thus I make use of it.

[*Runs away from him.*]

Enter CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Lady Bell. [*Meeting him.*] Oh, I have been wishing for you! How could you stay so long?

Capt. B. They detained me against my will; but you see I am true to my appointment.

Mil. [*Aside to BYGROVE.*] Are you so? You shall keep an appointment with me.

Lady Bell. I was surrounded with darts and flames.—That gentleman was for renewing the old story, but it was so ridiculous!

[*Walks up the Stage with CAPTAIN BYGROVE.*]

Mil. Distraction! to be insulted thus!

Lady Bell. [*As she walks up.*] You have prevailed upon me to be in earnest at last. Since your father has proposed it, and since you have declared yourself, why, if I must speak, get my aunt's consent, and mine follows of course.

Mil. [*Listening.*] If ever I forgive this——

Capt. B. Mrs. Bromley has consented. [*Then aside to LADY BELL.*] He has it; this will gall his pride.

Mil. No end of her folly: I was bent on marriage, but now it's all her own fault: And yet she knows my heart is fixed upon her.

Lady Bell. [*Walking down with CAPTAIN BYGROVE.*] You are so obliging, and I have so many things to say to you! but if people will not perceive, when they interrupt private conversation——

Mil. If ever I enter these doors again, may the scorn of the whole sex pursue me. *[Exit.*

Capt. B. We have carried this too far.

Lady Bell. The barbarous man! when he should have taken no denial, but have lain on the ground, imploring, beseeching—Delightful! here he comes again. *[Goes to CAPTAIN BYGROVE.*

Enter MILLAMOUR.

Mil. *[Walking up to LADY BELL.]* Is it not strange, that you can't know your own mind for two minutes together?

Lady Bell. Ho! ho! the assurance of that reproach! *[Walks away.*

Mil. *[To BYGROVE.]* Appoint your time and place—I must have satisfaction for this.

Capt. B. To-morrow morning, when the marriage ceremony is over.

Mil. I shall expect you, sir. *[Going.*

Enter LADY JANE.

Mil. This is lucky—I was in quest of your ladyship.

Lady Jane. In quest of me, sir?

Mil. In quest of you, ma'am. I have been waiting for an opportunity, and, if the sincerest sorrow can expiate past offences—Here's a chair, ma'am.

[Hands a Chair.

Capt. B. *[To LADY BELL.]* We may drive him to extremities with Lady Jane: I'll leave you to recover your wanderer. *[Exit.*

Mil. *[Sitting down.]* If you will permit me to assure you——

Lady Jane. But while my sister is my rival——

Mil. Your sister's charms carry their own antidote with them. If there is faith in man, I mean to atone for what is past.

Lady Bell. *[Coming forward.]* So, so; with what

pleasure she hears him ! Did you speak to me, Mr. Millamour?

Mil. There was a time, ma'am !—[*Turns to LADY JANE.*] Now she wants to interrupt us—don't let us mind her, and she'll withdraw.

Lady Bell. Wear the willow, Lady Bell?—Not a word, sir ; You are in the right ; my spirits are too violent for you, and though what I say is not absolutely wit—Do you like wit ? I am sure you ought, for it is undefinable, like yourself.

Mil. [*Smiling.*] That is not ill said.

Lady Bell. [*Sits at a Distance.*] Horrid ! I shall be vapoured up to my eyes. I'll try my song, to banish melancholy.—Where is that foolish guitar ?

[*Goes for it.*

Mil. Now her jealousy is at work.—I knew she would be mortified : Let us agree to pique her pride, and probe her to the quick.

Lady Bell. Though I can't sing, it diverts a body to try.
[*Sits down, and sings.*

*Sabrina, with that sober mien,
The converse sweet, the look serene ;
Those eyes that beam the gentlest ray,
And though she loves, that sweet delay ;
Unconscious, seems each heart to take,
And conquers for her subject's sake.*

Mil. Vastly well !

[*Listens, smiles, looks at her, draws his Chair near her, and beats time on her Knee.*

LADY BELL.—Sings.

*The tyrant Cynthia wings the dart,
Coquetting with a bleeding heart ;
Has cruelty, which all adore,
Flights that torment, yet please the more ;*

*Her lover strives to break his chain,
But can't, such pleasure's in the pain.*

Mil. Oh, charming! charming! [*Kisses her Hand.*

Lady Bell. What are you about, you wretch? Only look, sister—I suppose, sir, when you have done, you will give me my hand again?

Lady Jane. I promise you, sister, your triumph will be short. [*Exit.*

Lady Bell. How she flung out of the room!

[*Rises, and walks about.*

Mil. You know, Lady Bell, that I am yours, by conquest: I adore you still, and burn with a lover's faithful fires.

Lady Bell. Come, and have a dish of tea, to cool you.

Mil. Hear me but a moment—It is now time you should be tired of this eternal display of your power. Your power is sufficiently acknowledged, and felt by all: You may triumph over adoring crowds, but one lover, treated with generosity, will be more to your honour, and your happiness.

Lady Bell. Pretty—very pretty! I have read all that in one of the poets. [*Repeats:*

*By our distress, you nothing gain;
Unless you love, you please in vain.*

Come up stairs, and I'll show you the whole poem.

*And one adorer kindly us'd,
Gives more delight than crouds refus'd.*

Will you come? [*Beckons him.*] Won't you? Well, consider of it, and when you know your own mind, you may change it again. [*Exit.*

Mil. There, now! every thing by turns, and nothing long. Fickle, do they call me? A man must

be fickle, who pursues her through all the whimsies of her temper. Admire her in one shape, and she takes another in a moment.

*One charm display'd, another strikes our view,
In quick variety for ever new.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Room in MRS. BROMLEY'S House.

Enter MILLAMOUR and DASHWOULD.

Mil. Am I to be sacrificed to your humour?

Dash. Am I to be sacrificed to your absurdity?

Mil. When pleasantry is out of all time and place—

Dash. Why, then, I shall be tired of all time and place.

Mil. Lookye, Mr. Dashwould, it is time to be serious. The wit, that wounds the breast of a friend, is the pest of society.

Dash. The passion, Mr. Millamour, that runs headlong without cause, and will not hearken to reason, is a greater pest to society, than all the little wit that has been in the world. What does all this mean, sir? what is it about?

Mil. If I lost money at play, was it for you to carry the tale to my father? for you to subject me to his reproaches?

Dash. I don't know by what fatality it happens, but that generally comes last, which ought to be mentioned first. I repeated nothing to Sir John—Who did?—Do you ask that question? Malvil, sir, with his usual duplicity.

Mil. Malvil! He has this moment told me how pleasant you were upon the subject, and at my expense.

Dash. Yes; when he had revealed the whole, and with false tenderness lamented your folly.

Mil. 'Sdeath! I understand it now—I have been absurd here.

Dash. I don't dislike you for your absurdity; that serves to divert one: Malville excites other feelings.—You know the character he gave you of Lady Bell?

Mil. Yes, and all slander.

Dash. I left him but now, representing you to Lady Bell in the same colours—And here—[*Shows a Letter.*] Here I have him fast.—An anonymous letter against Sir Harry, sent for his own purposes, to Miss Neville—All his contrivance, dictated by himself, and written at an attorney's desk—You know old Copyhold?

Mil. Did he pen the letter?

Dash. One of his clerks was the scribe: The young man is now in the house, at my request, and ready to prove Malvil the author. Here he comes—things are not ripe as yet—Say nothing now.

Enter MALVIL.

Mil. Walk in, you come opportunely.

Malvil. If I can be of any service——

Mil. To be of disservice, is your province, and when you have done the mischief, you can transfer the blame to others.

Malvil. I have been rather off my guard to-day.—I am not used to be overtaken in that manner; my head is not quite clear.

Mil. Then this business may sober you—What was your whisper to me about that gentleman?

Malvil. That he treated with wanton pleasantry, what I thought a serious matter: I may mistake the means, but the end of my actions I can always answer for.—

Sir John might hear of the affair from another quarter, and so to soften his resentment——

Mil. You took care to excite it.

Malvil. I—I—I am apt to carry my heart at my tongue's end.

Dash. I knew his heart was not in the right place.

Malvil. I did not address myself to you, sir.

Mil. I know you have the grimace of character, Mr. Malvil, armed at all points with plausible maxims: But which of your maxims can justify the treachery of betraying the secret of a friend? Who does it, is a destroyer of all confidence; and when he attempts to varnish his conduct with the specious name of friendship, the malignity strikes the deeper: artful, smiling malignity!

Malvil. I deserve all this: Friendship in excess, is a fault.—There are bounds and limits, even to virtue. It would be well if a man could always hit the exact point.—There is, however, something voluptuous in meaning well.

Dash. Well expressed, Malvil! ha! ha! you are right.

Mil. No more of your musty sentences!

Malvil. Morals are not capable of mathematical demonstration. And—now I recollect myself—it did not occur at first—It was Madam La Rouge told the affair to Sir John—This gentleman here—I suppose you will take his word—he says, she hears every thing, tells every thing, and he calls her a walking newspaper: not that she means any harm—I only mean to say——

Dash. Oh, fie! don't be too severe upon her.

Malvil. She said at the same time—you know her manner—she told Sir John that you are in love with half a dozen, and will deceive them all, and Lady Bell into the bargain.

Mil. Distraction! she dare not say it: This is another of your subterfuges—You know, sir, how you

traduced Lady Bell, and made that gentleman the author of your own malevolence. At any other time and place, this sword should read you a lecture of morality.

Malvil. You are too warm; and since I see it is so, to avoid contention, I shall adjourn the debate.

[*Exit.*

Mil. Deceived Lady Bell!—Whoever has dared to say it—Madam La Rouge lives but a little way off—I'll bring her this moment, to confront this arch impostor.

[*Going.*

Dash. You'll be sure to return?

Mil. This very night shall unmask him. [Exit.

Dash. I shall depend upon you. Malvil shall answer to Sir Harry: all his artifices shall be fairly laid open.

Enter BYGROVE.

Bygrove. Mr. Dashwould, we are now good friends.—I have reposed a confidence in you: You know every thing between me and Mrs. Bromley, but you see how she goes on!

Dash. And I see how you go on: You are the dupe of your own policy.

Bygrove. How so?

Dash. The widow's schemes are seconded by your own imprudence: Can't you see, that if Millamour were once married out of your way, Mrs. Bromley would then be at her last stake, and you might have some chance? And yet, your son has it in command to defeat my friend Millamour with Lady Bell.

Bygrove. How! light breaks in upon me! Gull that I was! my son shall marry Lady Jane directly.

Dash. To be sure; and the consequence is, that Lady Bell declares for Millamour.

Bygrove. Right: I am for ever obliged to you—I'll go and speak to my son this moment: Lady Jane shall be his, without delay. [Exit.

Dash. So much for my friend, the captain: I have settled his business.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. Brom. Mr. Dashwould, I am so distracted!—a terrible business has happened.

Dash. What's the matter?

Mrs. Brom. Miss Neville—I can't think what is come of her—she is not to be found, high or low. We have searched every where for her: What can be the meaning of this?

Dash. Is Malvil gone?

Mrs. Brom. This very moment. He has no hand in it—He sees, and pities, my distress—He is gone to make inquiry.—A girl that I was so fond of, and never said an angry word to!

Dash. You have been remarkably mild!

Mrs. Brom. You know how tender I have been of her! What can have put this into her head?—How long has Millamour been gone? I understand it now: This is his exploit.

Dash. You wrong him—I will undertake to discover this plot for you.

Enter BYGROVE.

You can comfort the lady, sir; I shall return immediately. *[Exit.*

Bygrove. May I take the liberty, madam——

Mrs. Brom. Why torment me thus? You are all in a plot against me.

Enter LADY BELL, LADY JANE, and CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Mrs. Brom. There, Lady Bell, there is your lover run away with your cousin.

Lady Bell. I can depend upon her. I can still venture to answer for her honour.

Bygrove. She will come back ; you need not alarm yourself.

Mrs. Brom. You have seduced her, for any thing I know. I am distracted by you all, and will hear no more. *[Exit.*

Bygrove. Mrs. Bromley, permit me to say a word. *[Exit.*

Lady Bell. I hope there is nothing amiss: I can rely upon Miss Neville's discretion—I think I can.—Come, sister, let us go and inquire. *[Going, looks back.]* Hey! you two are staying, to say delicate things to each other.

Capt. B. Our difficulties, you know, are at an end. I have my father's orders to follow my inclination.—Had Millamour staid, I have a plot, would have fixed him your ladyship's for ever.

Lady Jane. And we shan't see him again this month, perhaps.

Lady Bell. Let him take his own way. I am only uneasy about Miss Neville, at present.

Enter DASHWOULD, with a Letter in his Hand.

Dash. This way, you are wanted: I have a letter here, that discovers all. *[Exit.*

Lady Bell. But what does it say? Let us go and hear it directly. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment at MADAM LA ROUGE'S.

Enter MILLAMOUR and LA ROUGE.

Mil. Have you sent to Dashwould?

La Rouge. Yes, I have sent him letter.

Mil. Miss Neville here, you say?

La Rouge. She come an hour ago, all in tear.

Mil. Then she is safe.—You are sure you never said any thing to Sir John, about the gaming business?

La Rouge. Sur mon honneur. What I tell?—I know noting. And I not see Sir John in my house, it is two, tree, months.

Mil. You shall come, and confront Malvil, at Mrs. Bromley's.

La Rouge. Bagatelle! vat you go dere for? Bo, dis all put me off—pay your littel bill. Vat is money to you? I so poor, you so rich.

Mil. You did not say that I should deceive Lady Bell?

La Rouge. Monsieur Malvil, he tell you so?

Mil. Yes, and I tremble for the consequence.

La Rouge. It is von great villain; I great respect for you.—Vous est aimable.—Monsieur Malvil, he is great fripon, and I ver sorry he be marry to Mademoiselle Neville.

Mil. Married to her?

La Rouge. You not know it? He is marry to her dis day.—He take my apartment tree week ago. He not have it known dat he is marry for five six day—write letter to me dis afternoon—he must be let in ver private—de servant not to see him—go up de back stairs to her room, and so l'affaire est faite.

Mil. And thus he has seduced her from her relations? Let me see the letter. [Reads aside.]

La Rouge. I not tink him so bad to talk of me, and tell such parcel of story, vid not one vord of true.

Mil. So, here he is, in black and white. To come privately, is he? If I could detain him here, and prevent all means of his escaping——

La Rouge. Escape? Up back stâirs, he must come through dat apartment: [Pointing to a Door in the

back Scene.] I turn de key in de back door: voila votre prisonier! he is prisoner.

Mil. Exquisite woman! I'll lock this door, and secure the key. [*Locks the Door in the back Scene.*] Hush! [*A Rap at the Street Door.*

La Rouge. Le voila! he come now.

Mil. Fly, let him in! send once more to Dashwould; I want him this instant; fly—despatch!

La Rouge. I do all vat you bid me. [*Exit.*

Mil. It is honest of her to make this discovery. If this be Malvil—a soft whisper that—[*Listens.*]—'Tis he, I hear his voice; I shall have the merit of defeating villany, and protecting innocence—Don't I hear Miss Neville? [*Goes to a Room Door.*] Miss Neville!

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Nev. Madam La Rouge!—Oh, sir! what brings you hither?

Mil. It is your interest to hear me; your happiness depends upon it.

Miss Nev. Alas! I fear he is too rash.

Mil. Command your attention, and listen to me: Malvil has planned your ruin.

Miss Nev. Impossible! he has too much honour—why will you alarm me thus? I am unfortunate, and you, sir, need not add to my afflictions.

Mil. You have trusted yourself to a villain! he means, at midnight, to gain access to your person—to triumph over your honour, and then leave you to remorse, to shame, and misery. Read that letter. [*Gives it her, and she reads it to herself.*] She's an amiable girl, and, I dare say, will make an admirable wife—Hark! I hear him in yonder room: Suppress each wild emotion of surprise, and wait the event.

Miss Nev. I can scarce believe what I read. What have I done? [*Weeps.*] You have led me into a maze of doubts and fears, and there I wander, distracted—lost; without a clue to guide me.

Mil. I will direct you : rely upon me.

Enter DASHWOULD, LADY BELL, and LADY JANE.

Dash. La Rouge has told us the whole story.

Mil. Hush ! no noise.

Lady Bell. My sweet girl, how could you frighten me so ?

Miss Nev. I blush for what I have done : But Mrs. Bromley's cruelty drove me to despair.

Lady Jane. My dear, all will be well ; don't flurry yourself.

Lady Bell. Though my aunt vexed you, why run away from me ?

Enter MRS. BROMLEY, BYGROVE, SIR HARRY LOVEWIT, and CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Mrs. Brom. Where is this unhappy girl ?

Mil. A moment's patience.

Enter MADAM LA ROUGE.

Is he safe ?

La Rouge. He is dere in de room, as safe as in Bastille.

Mil. Speak to him through the door : now all be silent.

La Rouge. Monsieur Malvil, open de door.

Malvil. [*Within.*] Do you open it, you have the key.

La Rouge. De key, it is dere ; Miss Neville, it is gone to bed ; all de house asleep ; I in de dark ; now is your time.

Mil. [*To LA ROUGE.*] Hush ! here is the key.

[*Takes away the Lights.*]

Malvil. Will you despatch ?

La Rouge. Attendez ; here is de key—I let you out.

[*Unlocks the Door.*]

Malvil. [*Entering.*] All in darkness ! Is she gone to bed ?

La Rouge. [*Leading him.*] She wait for you—were was you marry?

Malvil. St. James's parish;—Sir Harry has not succeeded—she prefers me.—Say nothing of it yet awhile.

La Rouge. No, not a word: tenez, I get light for you. [*Exit.*]

Malvil. So; I have carried my point. The family will be glad to patch up the affair, to avoid the disgrace.

Enter MADAME LA ROUGE.

La Rouge. Ah! you look en cavalier; ver good apartment for you; and dere is good picture. It is Tarquin and Lucrece; Tarquin go to ravish de lady in de night. It was villain, was it not?

Malvil. A terrible fellow!

La Rouge. And dis room it velle furnish: look about you; more picture, and all original.

[*Turns him to the Company.*]

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha! your servant, Mr. Malvil!

Malvil. Hell and confusion!

Mil. [*Taking him by the Arm.*] There are bounds and limits even to virtue.

Dash. [*At his other Arm.*] Morals are capable of mathematical demonstration.

Lady Bell. [*To Miss NEVILLE.*] Let us withdraw from all this bustle. Sir Harry, step this way; I want you.

[*Exit, with Miss NEVILLE, LADY JANE, and SIR HARRY.*]

Dash. This is all according to the fitness of things!

Mil. Something voluptuous in meaning well!

Bygrove. Dashwould, your ridicule is now in season to expose such a character. He is fair game, and hunt him down as you please.

La Rouge. Ah, Monsieur Tartuffe! [*Exit, laughing.*]

Malvil. The fiends about me!—Mr. Byrove, you are a thinking man; I appeal to you.

Mil. I appeal to this letter, sir. [Reads.]

Madam La Rouge,

Miss Neville has this day given me her hand in marriage. I would not have it known for some time. Conduct me to her apartment, unknown to your servants. The way up the back stairs will be best. Your secrecy shall be rewarded by

MARTIN MALVIL.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Malvil. The letter is forged——let me see it.

[Snatches at it.]

Dash. And I have another proof! this anonymous scrawl, written by your direction, and sent to Miss Neville, to give a stab to the character of Sir Harry. Do you deny it, sir? Your secretary is now in the house; I brought him with me; he is ready to prove you the author of this mean, clandestine, mischief.

Malvil. All false; all a forgery. Where is this French impostor? Where is your witness, sir? [To DASHWOULD.] I'll put them both to the proof, this moment.

[Exit.]

Dash. No private parleying.

[Exit.]

Bygrove. No; we must all hear.

[Exit.]

Mrs. Brom. Yes; all must hear.

[Exit.]

Mil. My presence may be necessary.

[Going.]

Capt. B. Millamour, stay and give me joy.

Mil. Of what?

Capt. B. The idol of my heart! to-morrow makes her mine.

Mil. Well, I give you joy. Who is she?

Capt. B. My Lady Bell, thou dear fellow! come, let us go and see what they are about?

Mil. Let us go and see who shall cut the other's throat.

Capt. B. A pleasant employment?

Mil. You shall tear this heart out, before you tear Lady Bell from me.

Capt. B. Very well; have your frolic—This works as I could wish! [Exit.

Mil. Despair and phrensy! if she is capable of a treachery like this——

Enter LADY BELL.

Lady Bell. You have done some good at last, Mr. Millamour.

Mil. Lady Bell—[Pauses, and looks at her.] I once thought——but you will break my heart.

Lady Bell. It will bend a little, but never break.

Mil. Will you listen to me? There is a tyrant fair, and you have interest with her; you can serve me; all the joys of life are centred there.

Lady Bell. [Smiles aside.] He is mine against the world. And so you want my interest? That's lucky, for I have a favour to request of you.

Mil. Is there a favour in the power of man, you may not command at my hands?

Lady Bell. You are very good, sir; there is a person, but the levity of his temper——

Mil. [Aside.] She means me——Your beauty will reclaim him.

Lady Bell. [Smiles at him.] May I rely upon you?

Mil. What an angel look there was! And do you ask the question?

Lady Bell. When sincere affection——

Mil. It is generous to own it.

Lady Bell. And since the impression made by——

Mil. Do not hesitate.

Lady Bell. Made by Captain Bygrove——

Mil. Made by Captain Bygrove! [Turns away.

Lady Bell. That wounds deep——and if you will assist my fond, fond hopes,—it will be generous indeed.

Mil. This is a blow I never looked for—Yes, ma'am, it will be generous,—and, in return, if you will intercede for me with Lady Bell——po! with a——Lady Jane, I say—I say, if you will intercede for me with Lady Jane——

Lady Bell. Oh! by all means. And, as I approve of your choice, [*He walks away, she follows him.*] I hope you will approve of mine; and, by mutual acts of friendship, we may promote each other's happiness.

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. Malvil is detected.

Lady Bell. And Sir Harry has settled every thing with Miss Neville. Go, and wish him joy. [*Exit DASHWOULD.*] My sweet friend will be happy at last. [*Going.*]

Mil. [*Taking her Hand.*] But you won't marry the captain?

Lady Bell. Will you make interest for me?

Mil. How can you torment me thus?

Lady Bell. You have done some service, and you may now entertain a degree of hope. [*Smiling at him.*] But have you another copy of verses for my aunt?

Mil. How can you? [*Kisses her Hand—Exit LADY BELL.*]—She yields, and I am blessed indeed!

Enter BYGROVE, MALVIL, and CAPTAIN BYGROVE.

Bygrove. The fact is too clear, Mr. Malvil.

Malvil. And shall the word of that French impostor——

Mil. She has acted fairly, sir; and what reparation can you make the lady, whose ruin you have attempted?

Malvil. Mrs. Bromley promised her a fortune, and I have promised her marriage.

Enter DASHWOULD.

Dash. And I forbid the banns. Sir Harry has concluded a match with Miss Neville: I should have thought him ridiculous, if he had not.

Malvil. That you will do, whether he deserves it or not.

Mil. You, sir, deserve something worse than ridi-

cule. You are thoroughly understood. Your tenderness for your neighbour; is malignant curiosity; your half hints, that hesitate slander, speak the louder; and your silence, that affects to suppress what you know, is a mute, that strangles.

Malvil. The probity of my character, sir——

Dash. Ay, probity is the word. He has had pretty perquisites from his probity; legacies, trust money, and the confidence of families. For aught I see, probity is as good a trade as any a going.

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Malvil. The still voice of truth is lost: you are all in a combination.

Bygrove. And you have forced me to be of the number.

Enter MRS. BROMLEY.

Malvil. Mrs. Bromley! you will judge with candour.

Mrs. Brom. Oh, sir! it is all too plain.

Malvil. It is in vain to contend: I shall be cautious what I say of any of you: my heart is with you all. [Exit.

Bygrove. Farewell, hypocrite!

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter LADY BELL, MISS NEVILLE, SIR HARRY LOVEWIT, and LADY JANE.

Lady Bell. Here, Sir Harry, in the presence of this company, I give you, in this friend of mine, truth, good sense, and virtue. Take her, sir, and now you have got a treasure.

Sir H. [To MISS NEVILLE.] It shall be my pride to raise you to that sphere of life, which your merit, and your sufferings from——

[Looks at MRS. BROMLEY.

Mrs. Brom. Why fix on me, sir?

Sir H. They are much mistaken, who can find no

way of showing their superior rank, but by letting their weight fall on those, whom fortune has placed beneath them.

Dash. And that sentiment, however I may rattle, I wish impressed upon all the patrons of poor relations, throughout his majesty's dominions.

Miss Nev. Mrs. Bromley, I have much to say to you. My obligations to you, I shall never forget. I am not ashamed, even in the presence of Sir Harry, to own the distress in which you found me. If, at any time, I have given offence; if, under your displeasure, I have been impatient, you will allow for an education that raised me much above my circumstances. That education shall teach me to act as becomes Sir Harry's wife, with affection, with duty to him; and to you, madam, with gratitude, for that bounty which saved me from calamity and ruin.

Mrs. Brom. Your words overpower me! I feel that I have done wrong. I now see, that to demand in return for favours conferred, an abject spirit, and mean compliance, is the worst usury society knows of. I rejoice at your good fortune: your merit deserves it. *[They embrace.]*

Dash. Why, this is as it should be.—Mr. Bygrove, I hope soon to wish you joy.

Bygrove. Compared to Malvil, thou art an honest fellow, and I thank you.

Dash. Millamour, is there no recompense for your virtue? In a modern comedy, you would be rewarded with a wife.

Mil. Lady Bell has more than poetical justice in her power. I wish Sir John were here: he would now see me reclaimed from every folly, by that lady.

Mrs. Brom. If it is so, I can now congratulate you both.

Lady Bell. It is even so, aunt; the whim of the present moment. Mr. Millamour has served my

amiable friend, and I have promised him my hand—and so—[*Holds up both Hands.*—which will you have? Puzzle about it, and know your own mind, if you can.

Mil. With rapture, thus I snatch it to my heart.

Lady Bell. Sister, what nunnery will you go to? Mr. Bygrove, command your son to take her.

Capt. B. That command I have obeyed already.

Lady Jane. Since the truth must out; we made use of a stratagem, to fix my sister and that gentleman.

Lady Bell. To fix yourself, if you please. I knew you would be married before me.

Mil. Dashwould, give me your hand. Your wit shall enliven our social hours, and, while I laugh with you at the events of life, you shall see me endeavour to weed out of my own mind every folly.

Dash. You do me honour, sir. And, if Mr. Bygrove will, now and then, give and take a joke——

Bygrove. As often as you please: but take my advice, and don't lose your friend for your joke.

Dash. By no means, Mr. Bygrove;—except, now and then, when the friend is the worst of the two.

Mil. Well, there is some weight in Mr. Bygrove's observation:—and yet, as Dashwould says, conversation, without a zest of wit, may flatten into a sort of insipidity, and——

Lady Bell. Oh, to be sure! change your mind about it.

Mil. There is one subject, Lady Bell, upon which my mind will never change. The varieties of life, till now, distracted my attention.

But when our hearts victorious beauty draws,
We feel its pow'r, and own its sov'reign laws;
To that subservient all our passions move,
And ev'n my constancy shall spring from love.

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